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

Series C: Interreligious Activities. 1952-1992

Box 19, Folder 1, Evangelicals and Jews in an Age of Pluralism [Papers], 9-11 December 1980.

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In Memoriam: G. Douglas Young
Calvin B. Hanson
Professor of New Testament
and Dean of Internship
Trinity Evangelical Divinity School
Deerfield, Illinois

"Jerusalem in Biblical and Theological Tradition"

An Evangelical View
George Giacumakis
President
Institute of Holy Land Studies
Jerusalem, Israel

A Jewish View
Asher Finkel
Professor of Graduate Jewish-Christian Studies
Seton Hall University
South Orange, New Jersey

4:00 PM

Coffee Break and Discussion

6:00 PM

Dinner

7:30 PM

Presiding

Norman E. Frimer
Executive Director
Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture
New York, New York

"The Holocaust and the Reality of Evil"

A Jewish View
David W. Silverman
President
Spertus College
Chicago, Illinois

An Evangelical View
George I. Mavrodes
Professor of Philosophy
University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Michigan

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 11

9:00 AM

Presiding

Judith H. Banki
Assistant National Director
Interreligious Affairs
The American Jewish Committee
New York, New York

Panel Discussion on
"Mission, Witness and Proselytization"

Evangelical Views
Vernon C. Grounds
President Emeritus
Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary
Denver, Colorado

Dennis Kinlaw
President
Asbury College
Wilmore, Kentucky

Jewish Views
Blu Greenberg
Chairperson
The Jewish Woman in a Changing Society
Federation of Jewish Philanthropies
New York, New York

Sanford Seltzer
Director of
Research and Planning
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
and Director
Task Force on Reform Jewish Outreach
Boston, Massachusetts

11:00 AM

Coffee Break and Discussion

12:00 Noon

Luncheon

1:00 PM

Presiding

E. Margaret Howe
Associate Professor of Religion
Western Kentucky University
Bowling Green, Kentucky

"Sin, Atonement and Redemption"

An Evangelical View
Donald Bloesch
Professor of Theology
Dubuque Seminary
Dubuque, Iowa

A Jewish View
Seymour Siegel
Professor of Theology
Jewish Theological Seminary of America
New York, New York

3:00 PM

"Prospectus for the Future"
Kenneth S. Kantzer
Marc H. Tanenbaum

"EVANGELICALS AND JEWS IN AN AGE OF PLURALISM"

A National Conference of
Evangelical Christians and Jews
Co-Sponsored by

CHRISTIANITY TODAY

and

The Interreligious Affairs Department of

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

December 9-11, 1980

TRINITY EVANGELICAL DIVINITY SCHOOL
Deerfield, Illinois

OUR PURPOSE

Relationships between Evangelicals and Jews have been cast into public consciousness in recent months by virtue of our nation's quadrennial upheaval called elections. Unhappily, the central realities and complexities of those relationships have frequently been far more distorted than clarified, particularly as a result of the sensationalizing of issues in the heat of a Presidential campaign.

This Second National Conference of Evangelicals and Jews is timely and pertinent, and affords us an opportunity to separate out sensationalism from sober understanding. In this forum, modeled on its earlier precedent, we will seek through the insights of some of our finest Evangelical and Jewish scholars and leaders to examine what are the authentic and permanent concerns that separate these two major faith communities and what they hold in common — as believers in the Holy Bible, as fellow citizens committed to freedom of conscience and as members of the human family.

CONFERENCE CO-CHAIRPERSONS
Dr. Kenneth S. Kantzer
Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum

CONFERENCE CO-ORDINATORS
Dr. Marvin R. Wilson
Rabbi A. James Rudin

This conference
is being made possible
through a grant from

**THE NATHAN APPLEMAN INSTITUTE
FOR THE ADVANCEMENT
OF CHRISTIAN-JEWISH UNDERSTANDING**

PROGRAM

EVANGELICAL-JEWISH NATIONAL CONFERENCE TUESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 1980

Opening Luncheon
12:30 PM

2:00 PM

Presiding

Joseph H. Ehrenkranz
Congregation Agudath Sholom
Stamford, Connecticut

"The Current State of Evangelical-Jewish Relations"

An Evangelical View
Marvin R. Wilson
Professor of Biblical Studies
Gordon College
Wenham, Massachusetts

A Jewish View

A. James Rudin
Assistant National Director
Interreligious Affairs
The American Jewish Committee
New York, New York

4:00 PM
Coffee Break

Discussion

6:00 PM
Dinner

7:30 PM

Presiding

Richard V. Pierard
Professor of History
Indiana State University
Terre Haute, Indiana

Greetings

Kenneth M. Meyer
President
Trinity Evangelical Divinity School
Deerfield, Illinois

Robert S. Jacobs
National Chairperson
Interreligious Affairs Commission
The American Jewish Committee
Chicago, Illinois

"The Moral and Spiritual Challenge of the '80's"

A Jewish View
Marc H. Tanenbaum
National Director
Interreligious Affairs
The American Jewish Committee
New York, New York

An Evangelical View
Timothy L. Smith
Professor of American Religious History
Johns Hopkins University
Baltimore, Maryland

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 1980

9:00 AM

Presiding

Alan F. Johnson
Professor of Biblical Studies
Wheaton College
Wheaton, Illinois

"A Jewish View of the New Testament"
Ellis Rivkin
Professor of Jewish History
Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion
Cincinnati, Ohio

"An Evangelical Christian View of the Hebrew Scriptures"
Bruce Waltke
Professor of Old Testament
Regent College, Vancouver, British Columbia

11:00 AM

Coffee Break and Discussion

12:00 Noon

Luncheon

Presiding

Walter C. Kaiser
Dean of Faculty
Trinity Evangelical Divinity School
Deerfield, Illinois

Address

Kennth S. Kantzer
Editor
Christianity Today
Carol Stream, Illinois

2:00 PM

Presiding

Gerald I. Wolpe
Har Zion Temple
Penn Valley, Pennsylvania

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

Wolpe, Gerald, I., Rabbi, Har Zion Temple, Penn Valley, Pennsylvania

The American Jewish Committee

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November 5, 1980

Dear Participant in the Evangelical-Jewish National Conference:

We are delighted that you will be participating in the forthcoming conference. Enclosed please find a tentative program and the printed program will be sent out shortly.

The conference will begin with a luncheon at the Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield on Tuesday, December 9th at 12:30 PM and we will conclude by 5:00 PM on Thursday afternoon, December 11th. Participants are expected to remain for the entire conference.

Out of town participants will be housed at the Sheraton North Shore Inn, 933 Skokie Boulevard, Northbrook, Illinois - telephone (312) 498-6500. Reservations have been made and room assignments will be forthcoming. We are arranging transportation from O'Hare Airport to the hotel, and transportation will also be available from the Inn to the Seminary. You should plan to arrive at O'Hare Airport no later than 10:30 AM, Chicago time.

The conference will provide three lunches, December 9, 10 and 11, and two dinners, December 9 and 10. Breakfasts can be obtained in the hotel. The evening sessions at the Seminary will be open to the general public but the other sessions will be limited to participants only.

Please fill out the enclosed form and mail it back to us as soon as possible, indicating your flight and time of arrival. Please record your expenses including food and transportation, and let us have them at the conclusion of the conference. We expect to have copies of the papers ready for distribution at the conference, and we intend to tape the sessions with the possibility of publishing the proceedings.

Please write to us directly or call (212) 751-4000, Extension 205. We anticipate a very profitable and meaningful three days in Deerfield, and we look forward to greeting you personally.

Sincerely yours,

A. James Rudin

Rabbi A. James Rudin
Assistant National Director
Interreligious Affairs
American Jewish Committee

Marvin R. Wilson

Dr. Marvin R. Wilson
Professor, Biblical and Theological Studies
Gordon College

AJR/MRW/fm
Encls.

AN EVANGELICAL VIEW

OF

THE CURRENT STATE OF EVANGELICAL-JEWISH RELATIONS

Marvin R. Wilson
Ockenga Professor of Biblical Studies
Gordon College
Wenham, Massachusetts

Presented at the
2nd National Conference of Evangelicals and Jews
Trinity Evangelical Divinity School
Deerfield, Illinois

December 9, 1980

One of the positive religious trends which has recently been building momentum in this country is that of evangelical-Jewish relations. Representatives of both communities are now making a conscientious effort to view each other seriously, rather than superficially. The cartoonlike images, and all-too-familiar caricatures, which so long evangelicals and Jews held for the other, have begun to disappear. A new era of interfaith relations now appears to be under way.

The genius of personal encounter has been the key to the realization of this new state of affairs. In this vein, Martin Buber well stated, "All real living is meeting." Accordingly, evangelicals and Jews are now entering each other's community with greater frequency. There, each is discovering a new and firsthand appreciation of the other. Evangelicals and Jews are having in-depth conversations on many of the deepest issues of faith and life.

It is clear that this new —and I must add, delicate— dimension of interfaith dialogue has yet a long way to go. But the strides made in this area since the late sixties have been enormous. Church historian Martin Marty drew national attention to this matter well before the decade of the seventies had ended. Marty observed that, for the year 1977, the deepening of evangelical-Jewish relations in this country, and in regard to Israel was "the most significant religious trend in the United States."[1]

To many, this recent development on the interreligious scene may come as a surprise. Indeed, significant interaction with the Jewish community has never been one of the hallmarks of mainstream evangelicalism. History shows that both groups have largely remained aloof since church and synagogue parted company centuries ago.

It is my purpose therefore in this opening essay to address the subject of the current state of evangelical-Jewish relations. For, I fully concur that there is increasing evidence of a new evangelical-Jewish awareness in America. My aim will be to discuss the scope and shape which this interfaith activity

is taking, then to explore the motivating factors behind it, and finally, to develop a prospectus for the future. The main emphasis will be on the interaction taking place within mainstream evangelicalism, which is predominantly Gentile, rather than the activities of the so-called Jewish-Christian missionary movement.

It should be stressed at the outset that I do not speak for all evangelicals. We evangelicals, like Jews, are considerably diverse as a people; neither are part of a fossilized or monolithic movement.[2] To be sure, though evangelicals hold to the historic "fundamentals of the faith," a good number are not comfortable with the label "fundamentalist." For these evangelicals, the latter term has unfortunately all too often been associated with a largely negativistic subcultural group of Protestants, a separatistic people largely cut off from the dialogue taking place in the pulsating world of modern ecumenism. Thus, those evangelicals open to, and committed to, the pursuit of interfaith activities represent but one segment of the combined fundamentalist-evangelical community.

What I have sketched in this paper is the result of the research and observations which I have gathered in recent years from extensive personal involvement with the Jewish community. During this time, my mind has been stretched and my personal faith deepened. And I hope that I may in turn have contributed something positive in the process. So it is my personal hope at the outset of this conference that the following discussion on —as it were— "where we're at," "why we've got there," and "where we're going" will be useful. In these paragraphs I wish not only to survey the current scene, but also to open up several pertinent issues which need to be addressed in depth in the future. Last, and most important of all, it is my desire to help set a positive, yet candid, tone for the many hours of dialogue which lie immediately ahead.

I. THE SCOPE OF RECENT INTERACTION

Formal dialogue between evangelicals and Jews is relatively new. The

first denominational gathering between both groups took place in 1969 at Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville. Contact had been sparce before that time. It was not until the last half of the seventies before the first major outbreak of interfaith discussion began to take place.

On both the national and local levels, and in both formal and informal settings, evangelicals and Jews are now interacting with greater regularity than ever before. At these gatherings, talk is proving for the most part to be rational, dispassionate, and two-way. Discussions tend to avoid superficial themes and fair weather niceties which would render such gatherings trite, if not virtually meaningless. Rather, most formal conversation deals with various issues of mutual interest including the common biblical heritage, Israel, and the current moral crisis. Specific attention is also being given to problems of human rights such as religious liberty, racism, anti-Semitism, and the role of women. Even topics which have historically divided both camps —the Messiah, the crucifixion, and proselytizing— are being openly aired.

The scope of this current interaction between evangelicals and Jews is broad and varied. It involves a number of constituent groups —from professional to lay— within each community. Thus, at the beginning of this paper it is important to point out some of the ways in which evangelical-Jewish relations are being built, and some of the various levels on which this interaction is taking place. The sampling which follows is neither comprehensive nor exhaustive. Rather, it is selective. It aims primarily at being suggestive of some of the many contexts in which evangelicals and Jews are presently finding mutual benefit from meeting.

A. JOINTLY SPONSORED AREA CONFERENCES

Today (December 9, 1980), here at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois, marks the opening of the 2nd National Conference of Evangelicals and Jews. This event is co-sponsored by The American Jewish Committee and Christianity Today, two of the most respected and

influential voices within each of our respective communities. It is, therefore, appropriate that we begin our survey of interaction by noting some of the recent area dialogues sponsored by national organizations and publications.

It is specially significant that this 2nd National Conference opens today, for this week marks the five year anniversary of the 1st National Conference. That conference took place December 8-10, 1975. It was, in the deepest sense, an historic event. It was the first time there had ever been held in this country an extended, interdenominational consultation of evangelicals and Jews on a national scale. That 1975 gathering gained the attention of the media when forty scholars and religious leaders —an equal balance of evangelicals and Jews— assembled in New York for three days of structured dialogue. The consultation was co-sponsored by he American Jewish Committee and the Institute of Holy Land Studies.[3] The place of meeting alternated between the American Jewish Committee headquarters and the Calvary Baptist Church. The agenda[4] provided ample opportunity for an open exchange of perspectives on some of the weightier issues of Scripture, theology and history. The conference demonstrated that representatives from two of the great religious traditions on the modern American religious scene could meet irenically and in a spirit of mutual respect. While common concerns were voiced, and age-long differences explored, lasting friendships were made. The overall result was a feeling of success. But there was also a strong sense for the immediate need of spin-off regional conferences by way of follow-up.

Since that New York conference of 1975, regional dialogues have been springing up in those parts of the country where both evangelicals and Jews have well established communities. Many of these dialogues are spearheaded by the efforts of the American Jewish Committee and its national director of interreligious affairs, Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum. By way of example, two follow-up regional dialogues held in 1977

—one in the east, the other in the west— may be particularly singled out.

In Philadelphia, one dialogue was held at the staunchly evangelical Tenth Presbyterian Church. Religious leaders from both communities gathered under the sponsorship of the American Jewish Committee and Eternity magazine (The Evangelical Foundation, Inc.). In addition to major addresses, and a kosher luncheon, the day was climaxed by a vigorous panel discussion on evangelical-Jewish relations. Later the same year, in Dallas, Texas, a different dialogue was held on the campus of Southern Methodist University. This gathering was co-sponsored by the American Jewish Committee and the Southern Baptist Convention. "Agenda for Tomorrow: Baptists and Jews Face the Future," was the title of the theme for this three-day conference. Several hundred lay people, pastors, and rabbis interacted in special interest sessions focusing on such issues as human rights, world hunger, and religious liberty. Key addresses were delivered by a number of national figures including senator Mark Hatfield, an evangelical Baptist from Oregon. The conference ended with the informal adoption of a joint statement indicating areas where continued cooperation would be pursued between the two groups.

B. EVANGELICAL INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

In addition to formally structured area dialogues, evangelical higher education is providing a second realm in which increased contact with the Jewish community is now being experienced. Evangelical colleges and seminaries are beginning to offer new or additional courses in such areas as Judaica, modern Jewish culture, rabbinic backgrounds to the New Testament, anti-Semitism, and the literature and history of the Holocaust. Some of these courses involve field trips into the Jewish community for worship services, holiday celebrations, Passover seders, museum visits and lectures. Also included have been trips taken to view mikva'ot (ritual baths), Jewish day schools in session, and kosher meat packing establishments. Of special note, however, is the fact that a number of

these semester-long courses are taught by rabbis under Jewish sponsorship. For example, since 1976 an evangelical seminary in the west has taken part in an unusual ecumenical program put together by the Center for Judaic Studies at the local University. These evangelical seminarians are able to enroll on a scholarship basis in a number of courses taught by rabbis, including one titled, "Judaism in the Time of Jesus." Other evangelical seminaries are now offering their students courses in Jewish studies through various theological consortium programs within their areas.

Evangelical colleges have a similar record of growing involvement. One institution in the east, a member of the Christian College Consortium, offers on its campus a full semester course in Judaism taught by a local rabbi through funds supplied by the Jewish Chautauqua Society. At another evangelical Consortium school, students enrolled in a course in Judaism taught by an evangelical professor, have been invited annually to several different synagogues. There they have put on programs for the Jewish congregants. These hour-long presentations are usually held at Oneg Shabbat gatherings immediately following Friday evening worship services. At these occasions evangelical Christian students have made use of the Hebrew Scriptures, music, art, film, literature, drama and dance in presenting various themes relating to the common biblical heritage. An open discussion on evangelicalism, led by the host rabbi, has often concluded the evening.

A very different example of interaction has taken place a number of times at one evangelical college located in a heavily populated Jewish area. At the invitation of the president's cabinet, the local rabbinical association has come to campus for one of its monthly meetings. There, these rabbis have joined with the cabinet, various faculty, and student leaders, in a kosher luncheon provided by the college. At these gatherings a rabbi or an evangelical educator has usually spoken on the significance of some aspect of evangelical-Jewish relations. At one of these luncheons,

a student-made film on the history of the Jewish people was shown. After viewing the film, the members of the rabbinic association greeted this evangelical student's celluloid interpretation of Jewry with a very positive response. An encouraging outgrowth of that occasion came in the months ahead: the student was asked to speak and show his film at three of the local synagogues represented by the rabbis who were present. It is clear that both communities can but profit from such mutually edifying endeavors growing out of the evangelical educational community.

C. EVANGELICAL CHURCHES

Another area where increased interaction is being experienced is in evangelical churches. Evangelical ministers and their congregations are beginning to open their doors more widely to the Jewish community. Today there seems to be evidence of a growing spirit of openness, helpfulness, and trust, free from many of the suspicions which have daunted such efforts in the past. Let us look at the New England region for several cases in point.

For a number of years, one Conservative Baptist Church has been providing its expansive facilities to a local Reform temple in need of more space for its High Holiday services. Another church in New England —this one large, suburban, and interdenominational— on a Sunday evening decided to set aside its regular worship service and experiment with a special community program called "Jewish Neighbor Night." Jewish friends and acquaintances were invited for a showing of the Graham-produced film, His Land, a picture one Jewish spokesman terms, "the best loving film about Israel today." The coffee hour which followed, climaxed a highly successful evening of evangelical-Jewish interaction and deepening of friendships. Because of the positive response shown this church by the Jewish people of their community, and because of the deepening of a friendship between the pastor of the church and a local Reform rabbi, an interesting return visit on a weekday morning was later arranged. This

time the rabbi came with forty of his Tuesday morning Bible class. After a tour of the church facilities (a new house of worship had just been dedicated) the pastor was asked by the rabbi to discuss the question of "What is Evangelical Christianity?" Several months following this informative exchange, the pastor and his people were invited to visit the rabbi at his temple. There they toured the building and heard him speak on "What is Judaism." Through these visits, both communities gained a new perspective on each other's faith, and a deeper appreciation for the intricacies and privileges associated with religious pluralism here in America.

One further example involving an evangelical church will be cited. The Boston Center for Christian Studies is an adult evening school of the Bible drawing several hundred lay people from churches in the Boston area. Classes are held in a large evangelical church in the inner city. A new course was set up so that evangelical students and their teacher were able to interact every other week of the term with a different guest rabbi. The response on the part of these visiting rabbis was most encouraging as they lectured on topics of vital interest to both communities. As for the lay people, for most, it was the first time they had been exposed to any articulate authority within contemporary Jewry. Once again it was proven that people come to understand another faith best, not by reading its theoreticians but, by personally interacting with its practitioners.

D. JEWISH INSTITUTIONS

There is a fourth area which reveals an increase in interfaith activity. This concerns evangelical Christians who are being asked to address Jewish institutional gatherings. Evangelicals who are supportive in friendship to the Jewish community are being called upon to speak at synagogue services, brotherhood breakfasts, Anti-Defamation League and American Jewish Committee gatherings, and community center lectureships. Topics have centered around such issues as self-definition, Judeo-Christian ethics, brotherhood, and

the nature of religious pluralism. On occasion, however, less formal and more personal presentations are being made. One such address, receiving considerable publicity was given by Corrie ten Boom, author of The Hiding Place, at a Conservative synagogue in the south. There, this elderly woman was honored by the host Jewish congregation for her efforts, and those of her family, in courageously hiding Jewish people in Holland during World War II.

Perhaps the most celebrated single address ever given by an evangelical leader at a major Jewish gathering occurred on October 28, 1977, in Atlanta. There, before 200 Jewish leaders, Billy Graham chose to address the topic, "The Evangelical Christian and the Jew in a Pluralistic Society." After speaking about his own Christian commitment, Graham proceeded to outline six areas[5] where evangelicals and Jews —despite theological differences— may work together for the making of a better America. Recipient on that occasion of the American Jewish Committee's first National Interreligious Award, Graham was cited for his contributions to human rights, support of Israel, combating anti-Semitism, and "strengthening mutual respect and understanding between the evangelical and Jewish communities."[6]

The kinds of evangelical-Jewish interaction we have cursorily mentioned above are but a partial sampling of what is going on. But one final observation must be made: the future shape and scope of evangelical-Jewish dialogue remains to be seen. Despite the fact that evangelicals are not being asked by the Jewish community to renounce their deepest faith convictions in the name of ecumenical broadmindedness, there are those within the evangelical movement who remain hesitant —even fearful— about the whole notion of dialogue. (We might hasten also to add that many within Orthodox Jewry have strong reservations as well). This element in evangelicalism unsupportive of dialogue is substantial at present. Thus, the growth of dialogue in the future will likely be closely related to how many of these currently resistant evangelical leaders and their organizations —church, para-church, educational

and other-wise— will be open to change their minds and provide the impetus, direction and financial backing needed to further interfaith activities with the Jewish community.

II. MOTIVATION FOR MEETING

One of the first questions currently being asked about this new venture in dialogue concerns what is behind it all. What prompts evangelicals and Jews at this point in time to seek each other out? Why are evangelicals and Jews engaging in this interaction? In short, what is their motivation for meeting?

Although history seems to indicate most evangelicals have had but one motive in mind —witness to their faith— when meeting with Jews, the new dialogue is making evangelicals and Jews both aware of other things as well. What are some of these other contributing factors and motives which lie behind current evangelical-Jewish encounter? We will begin this second main section of this paper by noting two important reasons why evangelicals are now reaching out to Jews.

A. FACTORS MOTIVATING EVANGELICALS

First, there is a genuine interest on the part of evangelicals to deepen their understanding of the Jewish roots of the Christian faith. "The single most important contact between Judaism and Christianity," writes Jewish scholar Michael Wyschogrod, "is the centrality of the Bible in the two faiths."[7] Wyschogrod is correct in that it is this common biblical heritage in which evangelical and Jew share that enables both communities to lay claim to being "People of the Book." Evangelicals have come to understand the message and background of the Bible in much greater depth through the archaeological, cultural and linguistic insights provided by the pens of Jewish scholars. Especially in such areas as the Psalms, the Wisdom Literature, the history of Israel, and the social and ethical teachings of the prophets, both communities have found a mutually beneficial common ground whereby jointly the ancient biblical heritage

may be studied.

For nearly two thousand years Christianity has been debtor to Judaism for the sharing of her rich literary legacy. The Hebrew Scriptures, which make up about eighty percent of the Bible, were used extensively in the first century by the Jewish authors of the New Testament. Through quotation, paraphrase and allusion, these writers drew heavily upon the Tenak (Old Testament) for the development of their theological arguments. One written Document was normative for Jesus, Paul, and the primitive Christian community: they lived their lives "according to the (Hebrew) Scriptures" (see Mt. 5:17-20; Jn. 5:39; I Cor. 15:3,4).

These same Scriptures were used for spreading the Christian message (see Acts 8:26-40; 18:24-28). In addition, the book of Psalms became the hymnal of the early church (see I Cor. 14:26). It was a church which began with Jewish believers, not Gentiles. So Paul, in his letter to the Romans, had to caution the Gentile believers of his day not to "boast" (Rom. 11:18) or become "proud" (Rom. 11:20), for they were but wild branches grafted in (Rom. 11:24), allowed by God's kindness to "share the richness of the olive tree [Israel]" (Rom. 11:17). He further adds, "It is not you that support the root [Israel], but the root that supports you" (Rom. 11:18). Such teaching by Paul should be an ever present authoritative reminder to all evangelicals. As a community, we must never forget that the roots of evangelical Christian faith run deep into the soil of Judaism.

Karl Barth once stated, "One has either got to be a Jew or stop reading the Bible. The Bible cannot make sense to anyone who is not 'spiritually a Semite.'"[8] Of late, evangelicals are being drawn more and more to explore the implications of the above statement. They are being impressed anew that the biblical view of reality is profoundly Semitic, and that Hebraic and rabbinic background materials are absolutely essential to hermeneutical studies. Especially through recent dialogue activities, evangelicals are becoming alert to the personal benefits which may acrue to them by being able to discuss the Scriptures face-to-face with those people

whose ancestors produced this Book, before it was passed on to them.

A second factor influencing evangelical outreach to Jews is the growing effect of relational theology within evangelicalism. For centuries there have been evangelicals who have so emphasized the propositional dimension of truth that they have all but forgotten its existential impact. In recent years this lopsided emphasis has been changing. Propositional truth is being balanced —some fear overbalanced at times— through an attempt to personalize theology. There is a serious effort to relate theology to people in the context of their life situation. Biblical doctrine is being brought down to earth where it touches man. Relational theology is no ivory tower theology. Rather it seeks to communicate with people in the market place of human experience.

This changing emphasis in present day evangelicalism has brought about a new freedom and openness in interpersonal relationships. Accordingly, evangelicals are now impressed with the importance of relating to others first and foremost, as people; not as mere random repositories into which bags of proof texts may be emptied with abandon. To say this, does not mean evangelicals now feel they must stop proclaiming, and now start denying, what they have considered to be the uniqueness of the Christian message. Rather, it does indicate a new awareness of what can be gained, rather than lost, from those whose faith may differ. In the words of evangelical leader, Leighton Ford, "As Christians we ought to be open to talk with anybody and to learn from anybody, provided that we don't give up the center of our faith. Christians," Ford further states, "can enter into conversation with Jews, Muslims, and others on a basis of friendship, of sharing common concerns we have as human beings, of witnessing to our knowledge of the true God."[9]

Unfortunately, evangelicals have not always been anxious to know Jews as persons, simply as human beings. Instead, Jews have too often been viewed as scarcely more than targets, trophies to be bagged on an evangelistic safari, and proudly displayed on a "spiritual scalp belt." The evangeli-

cal community is now coming to realize that to initiate thoughtful, loving relationships with Jews means that one begins by coming to know and understand them as people. Without this respect for his person, a Jew may feel he amounts to little more in the Christian's eye than being a key piece to his cosmic, Israel-focused, Jew-centered, eschatological jig-saw puzzle. Can an evangelical honestly call a Jewish person, "my friend," when he has never really taken the time to get to know him first by listening? This is where biblical teaching on communication begins (see James 1:19).

As a whole, evangelicals are becoming increasingly conscious about holding to an incarnational theology which truly affects relationships. They are learning that they must first earn their right to be heard. But this only happens when they spend much time coming to know Jews, and learning especially about the last two thousand years of their painful, yet brilliant history. Thus, many evangelicals are coming to understand that communication with a Jewish person must be more than a brusque one-way conversation. Such meetings usually have a similar pattern: they abruptly end as soon as it is apparent that the Jewish party fails to understand certain theological issues the "evangelical" way. Indeed, evangelicals are now being awakened to ponder the sensitive, yet provocative, admonition of William LaSor who writes:

> Until we know the Jew, and love him as a person, until we share something of his memory of the Holocaust, until we sincerely believe that we are in his debt and that there are still many things which he can teach us about the religious heritage which was first of all his, and now is ours too, it seems to me that talk about 'evangelizing' the Jew is only empty rhetoric. At best he will overlook what we say, and at worst he will be offended by it. Mutual understanding can only come through mutual trust —and that can come only after we have earned it.

LaSor concludes with this penetrating question addressed to his own evangelical community: "What have you —or I— done today to help some Jew trust us?"[10]

B. FACTORS MOTIVATING JEWS

The motivation for conducting interfaith dialogue does not come exclusively from evangelicals. It cuts both ways. Jews are prompted to seek out evangelicals for a number of reasons. We will consider but two among what appear to be the most important factors.

In the first place, there is the seemingly ubiquitous character of anti-Semitism. Within the Jewish community there are those who believe that anti-Semitism is the most important single motive as to why Jews enter into dialogue with Christians. Among them is James Yaffe. In his widely read volume, The American Jews, he states that

> ...the Jew's motive is much simpler [than the Christian's]. He wants Christian anti-Semitism to come to an end. He wants the Christian to admit the harm he's done and stop doing it. He may not be conscious that he has this motive. He may sincerely believe that he has joined the dialogue in order to exchange ideas, broaden his horizons, learn more about Christianity. But once the formalities are over, anti-Semitism is the only subject he really wants to discuss.[11]

Whether or not Yaffe's analysis is fully accurate could be debated. Nonetheless, he draws attention to a painful sore of the Jew which remains unhealed after centuries of history, and which makes him willing —even desirous— to talk about it.

The pages of history reluctantly point to the horrendous Crusades in Europe which started at the close of the 11th century, and the infamous Spanish Inquisition at the end of the 15th. Remembrance of these seemingly distant events, however, appears all but gone. To most modern Americans, the recollection that these tragedies happened seems to be now lost in the smog of antiquity. We ask, then, will the 20th century also be forgotten? Will the modern Haman, Adolph Hitler, be forgotten? Some 6 million Jews were slaughtered in the Holocaust —just because they were Jews. If this could happen but forty brief years ago, in our modern —and supposedly enlightened— world, who is to say it could not happen again?

Education alone has not proven sufficient. Many of Hitler's SS officers held Ph.D. degrees from European universities; they proved, however, to be

little more than barbaric technologists. Small wonder the discussion of anti-Semitism is absolutely essential to the Jew. As Arthur Hertzberg points out, "We must keep retesting the temperature of the waters in which we must swim and the indices of our own strength to survive, because these are everyday matters of the most profound personal concern."[12] Though unqualified, and seemingly insensitive in sound, there is reason why an old folk saying has continued to circulate for centuries among Jews: "Scratch a goy and you'll find an anti-Semite."

Lest we forget, there has been a dramatic rise in anti-Semitic incidents in both Europe and America during the past year. I am not referring to the so-called "polite variety" of anti-Semitism, namely the discrimination and/or antipathy displayed toward Jews in the social, economic and educational realms. Rather, I have reference to Western Europe where there has been a marked increase in synagogue smearings, desecration of gravestones, anti-Semitic graffiti, Nazi pamphlets, and grotesque Jewish stereotypes in the press. For example, in France, a growing wave of terrorism against French Jews culminated in the fall of 1980 with a Paris synagogue bombing that killed four persons and injured twelve. This was just one of more than a hundred separate incidents recorded in the last five years.

Also, here in America, the ugly head of anti-Semitism continues to be reared. In the greater New York area,[13] numerous incidents of anti-Semitic vandalism continue to be recorded. These include the painting of swastikas, anti-Semitic slurs, and obsenities on buildings. Two garages owned by Jews have been burned. Explosives have been found taped to the window of a synagogue. Other homes, businesses and synagogues have been attacked or destroyed. At a KKK rally, propaganda was distributed which attacked Jews and appeared to exclude them from "the white race." With vicious, inhumane incidents such as these, dialogue with Christians is a must. For if Jews have no genuine Christian friends they can count on, who can they trust? The "Jews of silence" are no more.

What can evangelicals learn from all this? For one thing, they can be especially aware of the dangers which a certain kind of theological anti-Semitism potentially brings in its wake. Theological anti-Semitism comes about when the majority religion tries to suppress the minority faith. For centuries there have been those in the church who have assumed a position of "triumphalism" regarding the Jew. In the view of these Christians, Jews did not accept the Messianic claims of Jesus. So, as unbelievers, they are now rejected by God. Their chosenness and uniqueness as a contemporary people is now passe. Jews remain "enemies of God" because of their responsibility for the death of Jesus. Bearing their guilt as "Christ-killers," Jews continue to survive only as a matter of divine decree. Hence, as a living faith, Judaism ceased to be two thousand years ago. In its place, the church proudly stands as the new and true Israel, heir of all God's covenant promises to Israel.

There are other Christian who argue that the Jew is forever earmarked to be God's suffering servant. As such, he is destined to undergo untold persecution in the future. In the end, however, God will put a hook in his jaw, direct him back to the land of Israel, and there drive him to his knees in repentance and faith —just prior to the Second Coming of Jesus.

Unfortunately, over the centuries, too few Christians have thought through the logic of such beliefs. In his both recent and challenging book, Armageddon Now!, premillennial author, Dwight Wilson, has much to say about the relation of certain Christian theology to the issues of anti-Semitism. He charges that there remains in today's church a theological perspective that makes Christians guilty of the charge of determinism. These Christians have "expected and condoned anti-Semitic behavior because it was prophesied by Jesus. Their consent," the writer goes on to say, "makes them blameworthy with regard to American as well as Nazi and Soviet anti-Semitism. Neither as a body nor as individuals has their cry against such inhumanity been more than a whimper."[14] Though many of the

author's fellow premillennialists may not particularly appreciate his assessment of this eschatological viewpoint, he has raised an important question for both Christians and Jews. In the words of one rabbi who recently commented to me about this theological perspective on the future of the Jew: "What greater justification and blessing does the Christian anti-Semite need than that he is carrying out the will of God?"

The church was born in a Jewish cradle, but it rapidly became de-judaized. By the middle of the second century, an anti-Jewish polemic arose within the church as men like Marcion sought to rid Christianity from every trace of Judaism. Other church fathers such as Justin Martyr, John Chrysostom, and Ignatius spoke with great contempt against Jews and Judaism. With the eventual triumph of Christianity in the fourth century as the state religion, its indebtedness to Judaism had, to a great extent, been forgotten. Judaism was now thought to be obsolete. Because Jewish people had rejected Jesus as their Messiah, what need did believing Gentiles have to associate with, or be indebted to, those of a dead, legalistic religion? The Jewish roots of the church had thus virtually been severed. A Gentile church, largely Grecianized through the influence of Platonic thought, now stood in its place.[15]

To this day, the rejection of Jewish culture by a proud, Gentile-dominated church, has compounded and confused the question of guilt in the Jewish mind. This has resulted in a defensive and basically anti-Christian posture on the part of many Jews. In the words of one writer:

> When the ordinary Jewish person attends a Gentile-style church and hears the pastor speak of how the Jews killed Christ, he reads into the situation a rejection not only of himself, his people, and his heritage, but of his culture as well. He hears, in effect, something like this: 'We Christians don't like you Jews; and we don't like your Jewish customs or your Jewish ways of doing things.' It's as though someone is saying to him, 'Not only did you kill Christ, but your whole religion is wrong <u>in every way</u>, as is your culture and heritage.'[16]

Let it be freely admitted that the cross has always been a problem for the Jewish community. To Christians it is a symbol of God's great act of love for man. But for Jews who are painfully aware of their history,

the cross represents centuries of hate and persecution. In the words of one Jewish spokesman, "The Christian looks at the figure on the cross and sees another person. I look at the cross and I see myself. That's what the goyim do to a Jew."[17] Only through the channels of sensitive interfaith dialogue can each community begin to perceive each other in realistic terms. It is indeed difficult for today's Jew to rise above the burden of historical memories and admit to the relevancy and indispensability of hearing the Christian "evangel." It has hardly been thought of as "good news" to his ears. The church has yet fully to realize that good theology can not be easily built on hundreds of years of bad history.

Evangelical scholars and pastors must assume the leadership in insisting that neither its own evangelical community, nor any Christian community, hold the Jewish people, or any other specific group of people, corporately culpable today for the death of Jesus. While Romans, Jews and others were involved in the events surrounding the crucifixion, we do not hold the descendents of any of these peoples singularly responsible. Rather, Christian theologians must teach and stress that the sin of all mankind —including their own— is responsible for Jesus' death.

Furthermore, as evangelicals, we would be wary of those within our own community whose view of theology and history mandates the suffering of the Jewish people as prerequisite to the return of Jesus and the final insitutution of the Age to Come (Olam Haba). To the contrary. We see the suffering of all people as a direct outgrowth of the sinfulness of humankind, which itself causes man's inhumanity to man. How God in his eternal, sovereign, cosmic will pleases to use the sinful actions of men and nations in no way "sanctifies" or even vindicates these actions. Let us never forget that some of the most heinous and barbaric acts in the history of this world have been justified on the grounds that "God willed it."

There would seem to be only one posture, therefore, open to the sensitive Christian thinker. It is to condemn all sinful acts, and to live

by example a life which promotes righteousness and justice (Amos 5:24; Micah 6:8). This has been a foundational teaching of both Judaism and Christianity. In the words of both Moses and Jesus, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Lev. 19:18; Mt. 22:39). And again, in the words of Hillel, a great first century sage, "What is hateful to yourself do not do to your fellow-man" (Shabbat, 31a).

In addition to the long recognized factor of anti-Semitism, a newer impetus for dialogue has lately surfaced in the Jewish community from a different direction. This most recent motivating force is the rise of evangelicals to candidacy for public office, and at the same time, the parallel impact of the New Christian Right. When Jimmy Carter began his drive to the presidency in 1975 as a "born again" evangelical Christian, the American public —notably Jews and other non evangelicals— became curious about the nature of this southerner's religious commitment. This was understandable since most Jews in America live in the northeast corridor and hence have had little firsthand exposure to evangelicals whose numbers are not comparatively strong in that part of the country.

Carter's candidacy for the presidency was a major factor in evoking the printed media to begin to give national attention to the "Evangelicals." For instance, one week before Carter was elected in 1976, the cover of Newsweek was emblazed with the words, "Born Again!: The Evangelicals."[18] The following year, a cover story of Time[19] caught the eye of millions when it captioned evangelicalism as that "New Empire of Faith," made up of a booming 45.5 million people.

Despite the fact that about 75 percent of the Jewish community voted for Jimmy Carter in 1976, Carter's election campaign raised certain questions and suspicions among Jews; "How would a self professed "born again" Christian lead a pluralistic nation of more than 200 million?" "Would he be a president who is evangelical; or would he prove to be an evangelical president?" "If the latter, what effect would this have on Jews and all other Americans who for centuries have prized the priceless right of

religious liberty?"

Carter's election was interpreted by many as a sort of "rite of passage" for evangelicals. It pointed to their acceptance into the heart of American cultural and political life. Why? Here was a relatively unknown Southern Baptist peanut farmer from the small town of Plains, Georgia. He would move to the large capital city of Washington to lead this great nation. Here was a man who would become commander and chief of the United States military. Here was one destined to be a world leader who would be capable of establishing friendships with such dignitaries of state as Menachem Begin and Anwar Sadat.

At the beginning of 1980, the final year of Carter's term in office, it became evident that two other evangelicals would be vying for the presidency. Their names: John Anderson, a member of the Evangelical Free Church, and Ronald Reagan, a Presyterian by affiliation. Reagan, during his successful bid for the presidency, became the favored candidate of the New Christian Right. He received enthusiastic backing from many New Right organizations whose membership is strongly made up of fundamentalists and politically conservative evangelicals. In the face of this rapid rise of the New Right, which includes various conservative Christian lobbyist groups, the current Jewish community has become perplexed and uneasy. They want to know about the goals and objectives of what has been termed "born again politics." Hence, not only Jews, but also other Americans have been asking such questions as these:

"Is it the goal of these fundamentalists and evangelicals to create a 'Christian republic' by 'Christianizing' government and politics?"

"Are those who do not line up with the vote of organizations such as the Moral Majority somehow, by implication, not good Christians (or Jews)?"

"If one grants the importance of stressing pro-life, pro-family, and pro-America issues, what about the Judeo-Christian teaching on other important social concerns such as poverty, peace and justice?"

"Will the New Christian Right continue to oversimplify complex political issues by seeming to view them as black and white matters simply because there are Scriptural proof texts which supposedly can be appealed to?"

"Is there only one 'Christian' way to think politically?"

"What is the responsibility of a presidential leader —in particular, an evangelical by conviction— when it comes to the issue of the separation of church and state?"

"How will a 'born again' president insure the preservation of American pluralism?"

With these and other questions very much in the air, little wonder recent years have been very unsettling and frustrating for the Jewish community —not to speak of a large segment of very sympathetic evangelicals. Accordingly, Jews have sensed a growing need to inquire about the evangelical beliefs and practices of not only Carter and Reagan, the two most recent presidential occupants of the White House, but also of those millions of Americans who claim a similar "born again" religious commitment. Gradually, Jews are coming to discover that not all evangelicals think alike when it comes to politics. Indeed, they are finding out that the words fundamentalist and evangelical are not necessarily synonymous. Jews and other concerned Americans are now realizing that for one to be a conservative Christian in religious convictions does not necessarily imply a conservative stance in political commitment. To be sure, there are many evangelicals who could and would welcome the day when the first Jew emerges from a field of qualified condidates to assume the presidency of this great land.

C. FACTORS MOTIVATING BOTH JEWS AND EVANGELICALS

The final four factors prompting dialogue, which I have set forth below, are particularly those mutually shared by both evangelicals and Jews. Though they may arise from one community more than another, in general they appear to be common factors around which joint interest in dialogue is frequently engendered.

First, interest has resulted from the fact that, since the 1960's, there has been a general improvement in interfaith relationships. Both evangelicals and Jews have benefited from a changing climate largely brought about by ecumenical endeavors, the civil rights movement, and specialized efforts aimed at easing racial tensions.

At the time of the fundamentalist-modernist controversy during the first half of this century, it was common to find Christians fleeing mainline denominations in droves, only to assume a more separatistic, anti-intellectual, and cultic stance. For many, a new Christian lifestyle had emerged. Evangelicals had pulled back from relating the evangel to societal needs, and had become preoccupied instead with some of the more peripheral areas of Christian doctrine.

But today, the picture has changed considerably. The mainstream of contemporary evangelicalism has now returned to a more culturally open position. There is renewed interest in socio-political concerns, mainline denominationalism, and ecumenical issues which deal with human rights in the context of a pluralistic society.

The progress made in race relations in the last decade and a half has likewise been paralleled by major strides in Catholic-Jewish, Orthodox-Jewish, and liberal Protestant-Jewish relations. Since evangelicals were the only major group left with whon interreligiously-minded Jewish organizations had not entered into formal dialogue, it was simply a matter of time before evangelicals and Jews would find themselves in conversation.

A second factor is the growing awareness of the need to dispel faulty images and popular stereotypes of each other. Personal encounter between evangelicals and Jews has also been prompted by the realization that many prejudices, distortions, and faulty perceptions exist. The geographical concentration of evangelicals is largely in the south and the "Bible-belt" of the midwest. Jews, on the other hand, are located mostly in the north-east and large cities of the west. As a result, various half truths and

stereotypic images arise from this mutual isolation. Accordingly, cutting epithets such as "Elmer Gantrys," "rednecks," and "wild-eyed religious fanatics," or "Pharisee," "Shylock," and "money grubber" have created unjust portrayals of each group.

By coming together in interfaith discussion, evangelicals and Jews are starting to discover accurate modern-day images of each other. This is especially helpful to those in the evangelical community who have sometimes in the past carried ignorant and painfully naive misperceptions of Jews and Judaism. Perhaps the major reason for this has been the fact evangelicals for too long have persisted in equating modern Judaism with biblical Judaism. Only by personally coming to know the Jews of today will evangelicals realize that Judaism is not simply the religion of the Old Testament, but one that developed from it. Little wonder, Anglican churchman John Stott calls his fellow evangelicals to get involved in dialogue. He rightly points out: "Dialogue is a token of geneuine Christian love, because it indicates our steadfast resolve to rid our minds of the prejudices and caricatures which we may entertain about other people."[20] If this alone were the result of interfaith dialogue, in my opinion, it would still be well worth the effort.

Third, evangelicals and Jews have a mutual interest in coming to understand their religious and cultural differences. The paths of both are crossing more frequently than in the past. This is happening through the military service, the secular university (most evangelicals and Jews of college age do not attend religious schools but are meeting in the classrooms and residence halls of large secular schools), volunteer organizations, PTA, and suburban neighborhood contacts brought about by the flight of the modern Jew from the confines of his traditional <u>shtetl</u> (ghetto).

With this increased interaction, evangelicals are taking advantage of the opportunity to ask a variety of questions —some simple, some complex, and all curious— about the life and practices of today's Jew. A sampling of some of the more interesting and frequently posed questions

heard in casual conversation are these:

"Why is a glass smashed at a Jewish wedding?"

"When Jewish women light the Sabbath candles, why do they cover their eyes with their hands?"

"Christians feel free to pray or sing while attending services in a Jewish temple, but why don't Jewish people pray or sing when visiting Christian churches?"

"Why don't my Jewish neighbors ever have any flowers or music at at their funerals?"

"Why don't Jews embalm their dead like Jacob was in Old Testament times?"

"Why do Jews eat chicken instead of lamb at their Passover seders?"

"Since there are no more animal sacrifices, how do Jews today receive atonement for their sin?"

Jews, in turn, are curious about evangelicals and their beliefs and subcultural practices. Typical questions informally posed have included ones such as these:

"Why do 'born again' Christians seem to always insist that Bible reading and prayer be part of the opening exercises in the public school?"

"Why doesn't the pastor of the evangelical church here in town seem to understand when our rabbi keeps on questioning the use of town funds for the construction and lighting of a large creche during the Christmas season on the lawn of the Town Hall?"

"Why does my son's public school teacher, who is an evangelical, seem to resent the fact I question that my son is made to sing with his class many traditional Christmas carols each year, when Hanukkah songs are never included?"

"If evangelicals try to be so biblical in their approach to life, why do they criticize us Jews at weddings for using wine and dancing when these things were so much a part of life in Bible times?"

"Is being an evangelical Christian simply a matter of believing certain doctrines about salvation and the world to come, or does the evangelical

faith have any direct relevancy to the problems of this present world of basar va-dam (flesh and blood)?"

The search for answers to these, and other probing questions like them, has contributed immeasurably toward understanding some of the religious and cultural differences separating evangelicals and Jews.

Let us turn now to one final factor motivating evangelicals and Jews to seek each other out: it is their common interest in the survival of Israel. Many (but not all) evangelicals see Israel's return to the land and emergence to statehood (1948) as in some way connected with biblical prophecy. This was boldly brought to the attention of the national public through full-page ads published in many of the larger newspapers across the country.[21] Signed by fifteen evangelical leaders, the ad affirmed belief in "Israel's divine right to the land," and urged evangelicals to write Washington in support of Israel's stance in the Middle East. This widening evangelical support of Israel is viewed by certain observers of the current religious scene as part of a "new political assertiveness," a move described as a "drastic step [by evangelicals] in their effort to overcome or repeal their choice to disengage, to be aloof from the public sphere."[22]

Whereas liberal mainline Protestantism largely assumes an attitude of indifference or passivity in regard to the backing of Israel, evangelicals tend to be strong and enthusiastic supporters of Israel's right to a homeland. Especially in light of the Nazi Holocaust, evangelicals are now speaking out to condemn the declaration "Zionism is racism" and back Israel.

Though much of the justification for support of Israel seems to derive from theological concerns,[23] today, evangelicals are happily giving other reasons as well. Political, economic and sociological factors are also important in arguing for Israel's right to exist as a free and secure state. Indeed, there is concern for a just peace among all peoples in the Middle East, not just between Israel and Egypt, or Israel and her Arab neighbors.

For a variety of motivations and reasons, Jews and evangelicals will continue to find a common bond of interest in Israel's future. Israel is the land of the Bible. Here is the stage on which the events of holy Writ have been played out for centuries. It is a land sacred to Jew and evangelical alike. And it will always be that way.

III. PROSPECTUS FOR THE FUTURE

When we seek to assess the present state of evangelical-Jewish relations, it is clear, much progress has been made. As we have seen, however, both communities tend to approach interfaith relations from somewhat different perspectives, and often with different interests in mind. Evangelicals, for instance, seem to be mainly interested in seeking out Jews for the purpose of discussing ancient biblical texts and/or theological issues. Jews, on the other hand, though neither unfamiliar nor passive about the Bible and its teachings, seem especially concerned they be viewed as modern living people, not as those whose image is that of the sandal-shod partriarchs with staffs-in-hand, so familiar to the cover of Christian Sunday School quarterties. Indeed, Jews may be more prone to discuss with evangelicals those two thousand years of history since the Bible was written, and the consequent needs and practical issues relating to this world in which they now live. In sum, as one Jewish leader has rightly stated: "Jews and Judaism cannot be seen only as ancient biblical categories; rather, Christians must experience the contemporary Jewish community today in situ"[24]

A. SOME JOINT PROJECTS TO CONSIDER

Recognizing the importance of the above admonition, it is apparent that both evangelicals and Jews must now seek out additional ways and new contexts in which they can profitably meet. This way they can become better acquainted in situations other than dialogues exclusively structured around biblical topics. Lay people especially, can benefit from interfaith activities when organized around community centered projects of mutual interest. I would therefore urge that the future of evangelical-Jewish relations move

more in this direction. Accordingly, let me suggest a number of possible joint projects and social settings by which church and synagogue groups might beneficially interact together: (1) Write letters to Russia seeking the freedom of enslaved Christians and Jews, (2) Share in a Passover seder, (3) Bring youth groups together to work on the constructing of a succah (an outdoor hut for the celebration of the fall biblical festival of Tabernacles), (4) Conduct a Jewish cooking class for joint women's organizations, (5) Hold a joint study-discussion group which introduces the Talmud through the ethical Sayings of the Fathers (Pirke Avot), (6) Have an interfaith music night stressing Jewish and Christian songs which derive from our common heritage, (7) Conduct a workshop on biblical art projects[25] useful for lay teachers, (8) Hold an evening of instruction in Jewish folk dancing, (9) Show and discuss films such as "His Land," "The Hiding Place," "Night and Fog," or "Fiddler on the Roof," (10) Encourage local Hadassah and Christian Women's Clubs to plan programs of mutual interest, (11) Produce a community version of "The Diary of Anne Frank," or, "The First American Thanksgiving," (12) Hold a joint historical gathering in the month of May to commemorate Israel Independence Day, (13) Begin a monthly joint reading circle which alternates between synagogue and church facilities; use such books as The Chosen (Potok), The Insecurity of Freedom (Heschel), Evangelical Roots (Kantzer, ed.), or How Then Should We Live? (Schaeffer), (14) Cross register in community lay religious schools for the study of the Hebrew language, church history, and other courses, (15) Take trips together to museums and points of common historic and religious interest, e.g. in Rhode Island, the Touro Synagogue and sites made famous by Roger Williams, (16) Plan a jointly sponsored travel-study tour of Israel, Greece and Rome, (17) Hold an illustrated lecture on Jewish or Christian history, archaeology, and culture.

B. OUR UNFINISHED AGENDA

To this point, I have largely called attention to those areas where both evangelicals and Jews share a common basis for meeting in formal dialogue and other interfaith activities. It would be less than honest, however, to leave one the impression that evangelical-Jewish relations are likely to be all "down-hill" from this point on. In other words, we should not think that just because we may have the ability to work together co-operatively on a number of joint projects—and I believe we have that ability— and agree on other things, this means we face no major obstacles ahead. It must never be forgotten that we represent two different religions. We must be candid with one another; we must never consciously down-play our differences. In the long run, we accomplish little when we fail to face our differences objectively for what they are. We have some sensitive areas of tension where theological antitheses of centuries past have resulted in what appears to be a perpetual impasse—an ideological cul-de-sac- which, unless God intervenes, may never be fully resolved until the end of this age. Evangelicals, for instance, are not about to abandon their belief in the divinity and messiahship of Jesus. Likewise, the Jewish community does not seem ready to abandon their oral law and proclaim man is saved —that is, worthy of the life to come— by faith alone. In brief, then, our agenda is yet unfinished. But despite these sharp differences, we must keep talking; and we must remain respective of the deepest faith convictions of the other.

When we pursue this matter of our respective differences further, it is precisely at this point that evangelicals and Jews confront perhaps the greatest —certainly, the most sensitive— challenge of the future. Therefore, it is certainly a realistic and timely question when it is asked whether evangelical-Jewish relations will remain harmonious and peaceful in the future. In recent months, for example, millions of evangelicals and Jews across this land saw how a single insensitive statement —on

whether God hears the prayers of a Jew— can cut deep into the heart of both our communities. Who is to say this kind of remark will not happen again? And what of those historically more substantive issues which have already divided us for more than nineteen hundred years?

Our prospectus for the immediate future therefore must be understandably cautious and somewhat guarded. Evangelical-Jewish relations have never enjoyed the luxury of proceeding from the stance of thoroughgoing and unquestionable optomism. The primary reason for this is because both our communities continue to affirm views —traditional to each respective faith— which immediately have the potential to bring us into conflict. I do not believe that these issues —many are held very deeply on the visceral level— have as yet been fully or adequately addressed in joint session, though our present conference is certainly a major step in that direction. Of course, we face the possibility that these present impasses will never be adequately resolved to the satisfaction of either community. After all, neither of us is seeking to build some symbiotic world-wide religious body. But at the same time, this gives neither of us excuse to side step them out of courtesy, or to pretend they do not exist out of indifference or ignorance. In my opionion, there are three main issues over which considerable difference of opinion and tension is found —whether overtly or under the surface— whenever evangelicals and Jews meet.

To begin with, we must recognize the foundational differences which exist in the areas of biblical interpretation and theology. Evangelicals hold to the canonicity and absolute authority of the New Testament writings; Jews do not. Because of this fact, evangelicals interpret certain Old Testament texts Christologically through the eyes of —what they believe were— inspired New Testament authors. Thus, it should be readily apparent why Jews fail to discover Messianic meaning in texts like the Suffering Servant passage of Isaiah chapter 53. Their hermeneutic is different. Evangelical Christians, however, arrive at their interpretation because eight of the twelve verses from that prophetic chapter are referred to

in the New Testament and associated with the messianic claims of Jesus. Taken alone, however, the Old Testament has no hint of a suffering Messiah, or that the Messiah is Jesus of Nazareth. What is more, in Jewish interpretation, the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) are not the only authority. The Bible must also be understood and interpreted through the Oral Law (Talmud), the Codes, the Responsa, and the commentaries of scholarly authorities such as Rashi. In short, Judaism is not bound to one authority, but embraces many, in a long line of living tradition.

The nineteenth century saw this matter of authority become more fluid through the rise of Reform Judaism. This modern movement brought in its wake an emphasis upon reason and experience; this tended to detract significantly from the Traditionalist's "Torah-true" or Halakic approach to religious authority. Furthermore, in its acceptance of the judgments of higher criticism on the Hebrew Scriptures, Liberal Jewry moved considerably away from the more conservative position common to historic evangelicalism. To be specific, evangelicals have usually read the Bible rather literally. That is, they believe in predictive prophecy, and generally accept both the details of historical narrative and the accounts of miracle-working as true. Likewise, evangelicals have customarily rejected such higher critical viewpoints as the Documentary Hypothesis of the Pentateuch (JEDP), the notion of a "Deutero" and "Trito" Isaiah, and the late (second century B.C.E.) dating of the prophecy of Daniel. It is important, therefore, to recognize some of these presuppositions and points of reference in that they very much affect the conclusions of evangelical biblical scholarship.

Modern Jewish scholarship, on the other hand, approaches most of these same issues from a radically different perspective. Thus, it becomes clear that questions such as the uniqueness of Jesus, biblical hermeneutics, the appropriate use of higher criticism, and the nature of religious authority represent major points of difference between the two faiths. It is indeed a strange and ironic phenomenon that the one written authoritative Source that in so many ways unites evangelicals and Jews,

at the same time so radically divides them. Without question, a thorough study of the history of canon, and the early schools of biblical interpetation, could well be undertaken jointly with considerable profit by both our communities in the future.

There remain two other tough issues which continue to divide evangelicals and Jews. Both of these concern outreach or mission —an area which appears to be as tense and controversial now as it has ever been. The first of these issues involves the polemical question of missionary organizations and the so-called Jewish Christian or Messianic Jewish movement closely tied to them. Whether referred to as Jewish Christians or Messianic Jews, these missionary groups receive the greater part of their financial backing from fundamentalist and mainline evangelical churches. Most are recognized by the conservative Christian community not as "fringe groups" made up of religious fanatics, but as those who represent a legitimate outgrowth of early Christianity in accord with the Great Commission (see Mt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; Rom. 1:16).

But at this point a tension immediately arises. The Jewish community is generally unwilling to acknowledge that a Jew can believe in Jesus as Messiah and still rightfully retain his Jewish identity. A Jew cannot have it both ways. He must choose on what side of the fence he will fall —Jewish or Christian.

The evangelical community, however, largely accepts and supports the idea of Jewish Christianity. One may ask, therefore, to what degree future interaction between evangelicals and Jews will be affected once this issue is openly and forthrightly addressed? Can this issue ever be approached irenically with Jews and evangelical Jewish Christians taking part in the same discussion? Past attempts have often resulted in heated arguments rather than constructive exchanges. Will it be on the horns of this dilemma that evangelical-Jewish dialogue some where along the line will permanently break down? It is understandable why there are those in both our communities who, like their ancestors, feel very deeply about these issues. To them,

it is a matter not open to compromise. Hence, some claim Jewish Christianity is authentic for it is "biblical;" others say it is little more than a "fraudulent masquerade." And so, after nineteen hundred years, it remains a most sensitive matter fraught with all kinds of potential controversy. Open dialogue may never solve this problem, but it can help immensely in understanding the issues involved.

The second tough question we are faced with in relation to outreach concerns the way in which evangelical faith is being communicated to Jewish people. A number of evangelical leaders are now taking a clear stand against "singling out Jews as Jews" in evangelistic efforts. In this vein, Leighton Ford, at the 1st National Conference in New York affirmed that "good news we have no right to withhold from anyone. But we do reject the neurotic approach which would select out Jews alone as some uniquely needy objects for proselytism."[26]

Along with this, other evangelicals publicly dissassociate themselves from any evangelistic methods employed to contact Jews which are considered to be "deceptive" or "devious," or "coercive" or "manipulative." In a word, they strongly shun any idea of so-called "hard line conversionary tactics." To be sure, no soul can be brought into the kingdom against his will. Nevertheless, for a future agenda item, both communities must come to grips with what it means for an evangelical to be genuinely "evangelical." It is the question of how an evangelical can be faithful to that understanding of his Christian calling to spread the Gospel to all men, and yet to do so in an honest, open, humble, and non-manipulative way. Is the evangel, in the very nature of the case, to be always reckoned a "stumbling block" (see I Cor. 1:23)? Is it realistically possible for evangelicals and Jews to agree on the ethics of bearing witness to that evangel?[27]

If we have learned anything from the last two millennia, it is that neither of us can impose or force his faith on the other. This overzealousness, unfortunately, has been the practice of some Christians largely due to their deep conviction regarding the finality of Jesus as the Christ.

Regretfully, this has often been associated with a depreciation of respect for Jewish beliefs and practices. But this should never be the case. As far as evangelicals are concerned, there is no ground for boasting or arrogance at this point. There is nothing inherent in Christianity that makes one individually, or us Christians corporately, better than Jews. It is indeed to our shame that this proud and elitist spirit has sometimes been openly displayed —particularly in situations which seem to have little respect for the concept of religious pluralism upon which this nation was founded. Such attitudes of superiority have often resulted in the denegration of Judaism to the point that the ground has been prepared for the sowing of the seeds of anti-Semitism.

There is a better way open to all Christians who truly care about the feelings of others: it is for us to recognize humbly —without compromise of the deepest commitments of our faith— that, "There is nothing to boast of in ourselves. We are just human beings speaking to other human beings, testifying to what we have found. We do not assume we are completely right and infallible or have nothing left to learn."[28] Indeed, growth comes through mutual sharing and a willingness to risk self-exposure. It is on this level that the deepest sensitivities and convictions of each other are laid bare. Yet, it is this two way street that gets to the very heart of dialogue.

C. IS THERE A FUTURE?

In bringing this prospectus for the future to a conclusion, we face, head on, the question: "Where is the current dialogue going?" From an evangelical perspective there is a broad range of speculation at this point. It is appropriate therefore that we call attention to two representative viewpoints. One is negative in its assessment, the other positive.

First, as was pointed out earlier, a large segment of evangelicals stand in great fear of dialogue. Many of these come from fundamentalistic church backgrounds. For the most part they feel that the evangelical movement has everything to lose by any kind of interreligious activity outside

its own self-contained evangelical world. By involvement in dialogue, evangelicalism is headed nowhere, they say, but to its own destruction. This will come because of a fatal compromise of its evangelical distinctives. Of paramount concern here is the potential severing of the missionary nerve of the church, and the consequent denial of other vital evangelical dogmas. So, it is argued, dialogue is to be avoided lest evangelicals succumb to compromising ecumenical pressures. Those who will mount these pressures, these evangelicals insist, though appearing friendly at first will eventually convince evangelicals not in any way to be an offense religiously to others. There will be strong insistance that evangelicals display great tolerance and broadmindedness, for this is an age of "live and let live." Where does this "garden path" eventually lead?, they point out: it ends when evangelicals suddenly and tragically find themselves part of some doctrineless ecumenical religious body. Then New Testament Christianity will have lost its uniqueness, and the wisdom of the biblical warning about compromise will be vindicated: shun syncretism and the mixing with those on the "other side."

In contrast to the above, there is another segment of evangelicals —and I number myself among them— who are rather enthusiastic about the future prospect of dialogue. They refuse to believe God has rejected his people (Rom. 11:1) and that there is no more place for Israel in God's redemptive and messianic program. Rather, these evangelicals affirm that they who once were not part of God's people, and who became his people purely by his grace, can learn much from those who from biblical times have been his people.[29] Most of these evangelicals believe Jews some day will be one with them. While affirming the centrality of a Christian witness which sees the Gospel as open to all peoples everywhere, these evangelicals believe that Romans 9-11 teaches that in God's plan Judaism and Christianity will co-exist until the end of this age. At that time God will regraft into the olive tree (Rom. 11:23) those natural branches (Jews) beside the place where the wild olive branches (Gentiles) presently grow, so finally,

"all Israel will be saved" (Rom. 11:26). It would appear from the context that the Apostle Paul's understanding of this future salvation of Israel is tied clearly to Jesus, the one he called the Messiah. But irrespective of the eschatological leanings of these same evangelicals, they are conscious that, from the New Testament perspective, the when and how of God's sovereign outworking of his plan for "Israel after the flesh" remains shrouded in a great mystery which no man can fathom (Rom. 11:33,34).

At this point, therefore, who knows how the Spirit of God will choose to shape or use this new dialogue in the future? That remains to be seen; it is in his hands. He is still the Lord of history, and the ultimate Judge of men and movements. He controls for his own glory and purposes the affairs of his people; the Almighty omnisciently sees as no mere mortal can presently see.

What <u>is</u> important is that barriers of communication are now being broken down between evangelicals and Jews. This new dialogue is now enabling evangelicals —many for the first time— to learn from, and make lasting friendships with, a people who have brought riches to the Gentile world (see Rom. 11:12).

For hundreds of years the evangelical has had something to offer the Jew; but for thousands of years the Jew has had something to teach the rest of the world. Witness to the tradition of one's faith cuts both ways. Hopefully, for both evangelicals and Jews, more riches have yet to be discovered. So, dialogue need not be written off out of peril, but pursued for its potential.

But will evangelical and Jew respond by becoming increasingly involved? The history of the eighties will tell.

ENDNOTES

[1]Martin Marty, Context, Jan. 1, 1978, p.1

[2]See my discussion on, "What is Evangelicalism," in "An Evangelical Perspective on Judaism," Evangelicals and Jews in Conversation, ed. Marc H. Tanenbaum, Marvin R. Wilson and A. James Rudin (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1978), pp. 3-7.

[3]The Institute of Holy Land Studies is an evangelical school of higher education based in Jerusalem. It largely attracts students and support from the American evangelical community. The founder and first president of the Institute, G. Douglas Young (deceased in May, 1980), served as co-chairman with Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum at this 1st National Conference in New York.

[4]The full text of the eighteen papers presented at this conference (nine by evangelicals, and nine by Jews) is found in Evangelicals and Jews in Conversation cited in note no. 2 above.

[5]A condensed version of Billy Graham's address is found under the title, "Be Strong," Decision, (June 1978), p. 6. The six areas where Graham called for evangelical-Jewish co-operation are these: (1) working and praying together for the peace of Jerusalem, (2) working together for improved race relations among black and white, (3) joint honoring, supporting, and undergirding of our nation, (4) hammering out together a common agreement so that moral law may be taught to the young people in our public schools, (5) working together for world peace, freedom and justice, (6) working jointly for a national, spiritual and moral awakening

[6]Newsweek, Nov. 28, 1977, p. 126.

[7]Michael Wyschogrod, "Judaism and Evangelical Christianity," Evangelicals and Jews in Conversation, p. 35.

[8]Quoted in Thomas Merton, ed., Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1968), p. 14.

[9]"A Conversation with Leighton Ford," The Reformed Journal, November 1980, p. 16.

[10]William Sanford LaSor, The Reformed Journal, Nov. 1976, p. 14.

[11]James Yaffe, The American Jews (New York: Random House, 1968), p. 47.

[12]Arthur Hertzberg, Anti-Semitism and Jewish Uniqueness: Ancient and Contemporary (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University, 1975), p. 17.

[13]For a brief summary of specific cases, see "Anti-Semitic Vandals in Suburbs Are Causing Concern," The New York Times, November 5, 1980, p. B2.

[14]Dwight Wilson, Armageddon Now! (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1977), p. 217.

[15]Marvin R. Wilson, "Hebrew Thought in the Life of the Church," The Literature and Meaning of Scripture, ed. Morris A. Inch and C. Hassell Bullock (Grand Rapids: Baker), p.

[16]Philip Goble, "Jewish Reaction to the Guilt Question," Pentecostal Evangel, April 17, 1977, p. 13.

[17]"How Jews See Jesus," Newsweek, April 18, 1977, p. 88.

[18]Newsweek, Oct. 25, 1976.

[19]Time, Dec. 26, 1977, pp. 52-58.

[20]John Stott, Christian Mission in the Modern World (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity, 1975), p. 81

[21]The ad is titled, "Evangelicals Concerned for Israel." See The New York Times (November 1, 1977), p. 12.

[22]Marty, Context, p. 1.

[23]For an elaboration of this point, see my article, "Zionism as Theology: An Evangelical Approach," Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society, March, 1979, pp. 27-44.

[24]A. James Rudin, "Prospectus for the Future," Evangelicals and Jews in Conversation, p. 311.

[25]For ideas, see The Jewish Catalogue, Jewish Publication Society, 1973.

[26]Leighton Ford, "A Letter to Richard," Evangelicals and Jews in Conversation, p. 307.

[27]For a discussion of this question, and others related to it, see my article, "Christians and Jews: Competing for Converts?", Christianity Today, March 21, 1980, pp. 28-30.

[28]Clark Pinnock, "Why Is Jesus the Only Way?", Eternity, December, 1976, p. 14.

[29]William Sanford LaSor, "The Messiah: An Evangelical Christian View," Evangelicals and Jews in Conversation, p. 93.

A JEW LOOKS AT THE NEW TESTAMENT

by

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A JEW LOOKS AT THE NEW TESTAMENT

As the title of my paper, "A Jew Looks at the New Testament," suggests, the views which I share with you this morning are the views of a single Jew. They are not the views of either the Jewish people as a whole or any fraction thereof. For all I know, these views may be singular, shared by no other Jew. They are nonetheless the views of a Jew who is deeply committed to Judaism and who has for more than a generation been teaching the history of Jews and Judaism to rabbinic students at the Hebrew Union College and to Christian graduate students as well. Nontheless what I shall share with you is the outcome of a highly personal odyssey which reaches back to my early life in Judaism when I was, as to the Law a Pharisee, as to righteousness under the Law, blameless, and as to the writings of the New Testament both ignorant and rejective; and which extends to this very moment when I stand before you unbound by the Law, highly insecure as to my righteousness, knowledgable of the teachings of the New Testament, and confessing that my Jewish spirit has been enriched by them.

How, I ask myself, could I, of all people, be speaking to you here today of a book which, until my University years, I never dared to read, lest its false teachings contaminate my soul nurtured on the purity of God's authentic revelations? I was born and raised in an ultra-Orthodox home. I learned to read Hebrew before English, and the Torah before Little Red Riding Hood. I went to Heder, the Hebrew school, several hours each day; began the study of the Talmud before I was bar-mitzvah; was trained to read from the scroll of the Torah on the Sabbath and Festivals; trekked miles to attend daily morning services in the synagogue and only when the services were over did I board the street car to a distant high school; and gained for myself a reputation for righteousness and piety

that filled the hearts of my parents with pride and my fantasies with messianic ambition. If ever there was a life predestined for the glory of God, seemingly it was mine. I had been singled out so it seemed to me, by God the Father to tend His vineyard and keep it free of alien and blighting growths.

But as it turned out, neither I, or my parents, or my teachers had read the signs aright. To be sure, I was pious, and I was Law-abiding, and I was confident that my piety and righteousness would assure for me eternal life and resurrection. Yet when I was feeling most pleased with myself and most confident of my salvation, I had a terrifying experience on the road to the synagogue. I was sixteen years old at the time, and at the height of my piety and righteousness and confidence. I was more and more visualizing myself as the intrepid champion of the Law and defender of the Faith. With these goals in forefront of my mind, I had been reading R. Traver Herford's highly appealing and sympathetic re-appraisal of the Pharisees, and was deeply impressed with his efforts to convey to Christian readers the inner joy which a believing Jew feels when he is yoked to the Law. Herford also exposed me to Paul for the first time, and I was appalled that anyone who had been so loyal a son of the Law could have been so out of his mind that he could have thrown over the Law for a false Messiah, Jesus.

I could not help but feel a glow of pride and satisfaction that, unlike Paul, my faith and loyalty was sturdy and impregnable. Exultant, I trudged off to the synagogue for study and for the afternoon and evening prayers which would follow. It was the Sabbath, around four o'clock in the afternoon and a baseball game was in progress on the sandlot diamond which I had to pass enroute. The day was sunny and pleasant and as I paused to watch the game for a moment or two, I was

flooded with pre-bar-mitzvah memories of joys and ambitions that had had nothing to do with the Law. Indeed the Law had been in the way, for it forbade playing of ball on the Sabbath, the very day which, for a young boy, should have been set aside for sporting events. This, it seemed to me, was asking too much. The Law may have been given by God, and it may have prohibited the playing of ball on the Sabbath, yet God's command "Thou shalt not play ball" was countermanded by an even more powerful command deep within me which proclaimed, "Thou shalt play ball, even on the Sabbath." And play ball I did, even though this meant sneaking off to some neighborhood far from my father's prying eyes.

Suddenly I was jolted out of my reverie by a terrifying thought. "What if Paul was right?" "What if the Law was not binding?" "What if behind the Law, sin lurked, ready to provoke some untamed impulse to defy the Law and the God who had revealed it?" I broke out in a cold sweat and began to run, not walk, towards the synagogue. But I had great difficulty. The thought would not go away. I became more and more terrified. I was on the edge of paralysis when, by a sheer exertion of will, I marshalled my religious defenses, calmed down, and made my way to the synagogue where my spirits and confidence were revived. Buoyed by the return of my senses, I "forgot" the tremendum that I had experienced and resumed my Lawful ways.

Though I "forgot" what had occurred, the episode itself was a portent far more prophetic than the resumption of my pious and righteous life under the Law. For it was to be only a few years later that I was to diverge from the road I had been following. At John Hopkins, I studied under brilliant scholars who compelled me to rethink and reevaluate all that I had taken for granted, and I was persuaded that the key to understanding both Judaism and Christianity

was to be found in a critical re-thinking and re-structuring of the history and religion of the people of Israel. And it was in the process of carrying through this task that the New Testament was transformed for me from a book of revulsion into a book of revelation. For what I was more and more forced to acknowledge was the fact that the New Testament records not so much an irreparable break from Judaism, as a mutation of Judaism, a mutation which was not recognized as such at the time because Judaism had never been thought of as a developmental religion, or Israel as a developmental people, or God as a Being, so infinite and beyond human understanding, that His fullness needed more than one revelation for its disclosure.

Ironically, the more I drifted away from the Law and the more I shed the unquestioning faith of my early life in Judaism, the more I was able to deepen my faith by discovering that God had given multiple revelations to Israel. The orthodox Judaism on which I had been nurtured was not the pristine form of Judaism, but rather a form of Judaism that had not been known to Moses, or Isaiah or Ezekiel. It was not the religon of Israel as set forth in the Pentateuch. Rather it was mutational form of Judaism. Far from having been given on Sinai, the Oral Law had been born in the crucible of the Hasmonean Revolt against Antiochus and his Jewish supporters. The belief in eternal life and resurrection which went hand in hand with the Oral Law had not been spelled out in the Pentateuch. The Scribes-Pharisees who had legitimitized this mutation had themselves exercised an authority which had no Pentateuchal warrant. The proof-texting manner in which Scriptures was now read by the Scribes-Pharisees was at odds with the way Scriptures had previously been read. The institutions which were to become by-words, the Beth Din ha-Gadol and the synagogue were nowhere provided for in the Pentateuch. The

daily reciting of the shema and mandatory prayers were not called for by Pentateuchal law. The Sadducees who insisted, with justice, that God had given only the Written Law and that the rewards and punishments spelled out by the Written Law were to be exclusively this worldly rewards and punishments -- these Sadducees were denounced by the Scribes-Pharisees and condemned to eternal damnation. Far from being the only revelation, the two-fold Law of my early life in Judaism, was a mutational form of Judaism which had displaced the Judaism, which, for several centuries, had been grounded in a literal reading of the Pentateuch.

Further study revealed further complications. The Pentateuchal form of Judaism itself had been preceded by a form which had been radically different. It was a form whose hallmark was prophecy. God talked to prophets and revealed His will to them. They, the prophets, were the ultimate authorities and not the priests. Pentateuchal Judaism thus showed itself to have been a mutational form of Judaism. Its triumph had sealed the lips of the prophets by limiting God's revelation to the immutable laws given to Moses on Sinai and written down once and for all.

It thus became evident to me that the development of the religion of Israel was no simple replicating process, but had been punctuated by the bursting out of unanticipated mutations. The prophets had never anticipated a day when prophecy would end. The Aaronide priesthood had never anticipated a day when the Scribes-Pharisees would sit in Moses' seat and God's revelation on Sinai would have been of a two-fold Law, Written and Oral, and not the Written Law alone. Yet the unanticipated not only occurred, but became normative forms of Judaism. If normative, then God must have had the power to reveal again and

again. Otherwise how could the Written Law displace prophecy, and the Oral Law gain ascendency over the Written.

And to compound the complexity, I discovered that there had arisen in Alexandria a Hellenistic form of Judaism which was mutational in its own right. It was mutational because it dissolved the highly personal anthropomorphic God of the Pentateuch into the God of the philosophers, and the simple stories of Genesis and Exodus into sophisticated allegories. Yet it was this transmuted Judaism that was the Judaism of Philo even though it had not been the Judaism of the prophets, or of the literal Pentateuch, or of the two-fold Law of the Scribes-Pharisees.

With these three mutations spread before me I concluded, that each of these mutations must have been bona-fide revelation for those Jews who altered their beliefs and re-structured their mode of life? For otherwise, that form of Judaism which to this day is regarded as normative by most Jews, namely rabbinic Judaism, would have had no historical legitimacy.

If then I acknowledged that mutations had occurred in Judaism before the rise of Christianity, and that these mutations had come to be regarded as revelations by large numbers of Jews, then I was bound to read the New Testament with an eye to the possibility that the Gospels, Acts, the Letters of Paul, and the other books of the New Testament was recording the breakout of a fourth mutation, a mutation which had been no less a revelation than the three mutations which had preceded it.

It is with this possibility in mind that I invite you to take a look with me at the New Testament. What is so striking at first glance is that we find ourselves, despite the Greek, within the framework of Judaism. The synoptic gospels are cast in literary forms evocative of the historical books of the Bible; the prooftexting which abounds is none other than the prooftexting we find in the Mishnah; the controversies between Jesus and the Scribes-Pharisees have no referent outside the community of Israel; Jesus' preachments of the coming of the Kingdom could have had meaning only for Jews; the synagogues in which Jesus reads from the prophets, heals the sick, and forgives sins is a Jewish house of worship for believing Jews and not unconverted Gentiles; terms such as Son of Man, Messiah, and David's scion were emotion-laden for the descendents of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but for no others; and Jesus' last words on the cross are from a psalm, and not from some alien litany.

The book of Acts is no less Jewish than are the Synoptics. An outsider would be at a loss to find his way in this Jewish world until he had become an insider. One has only to recall the tussle that broke out between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, when Paul cried out that he was being harried because of his teaching of the resurrection, to appreciate how bewildering these doctrinal differences were bound to be to unbriefed Gentiles.

Even the Gospel of John does not extricate itself from the matrix of Judaism. The Gospel is addressed to Gentiles; it is rejective of the Jews as the people of God; it mounts a harsh and bitter polemic against the entire Jewish people for having crucified the Christ: yet it is a Gospel that underscores the fact that the people of Israel were the people of Christ in the flesh; it was the people to whom God the Father had sent the light; it was the people who had by failing to see the light while Christ was among them and who had failed to see the Christ when he

was crucified, had lost their right to be the people of God to those Gentiles who had seen the light through the resurrection. But the post-resurrection people of God are not cut off from the Israel to whom Christ had been sent in the flesh. Far from it. The Gospel of John, like the Synoptic Gospels, feels compelled to proof-text his claims from Scripture with the implication that if Scriptural proof were lacking, his claims that the Christians were the true people of God would be worthless. The fact that in his time Israel consisted overwhelmingly of Gentiles was beside the point, if it were indeed true that the God of Israel had sent His son to His people in the flesh and they had rejected him. There was, after all, good biblical and Pharisaic precedent for God's casting off those of His people Israel, like the Sadducees, who had violated the covenant and, though born to Israel of the flesh, were cast out of Israel of the spirit.

Now it is true, of course, that the Gospel of John raises some very sticky questions, not so much in principle, as in practice. In the past, however large the number of Jews who had been deemed outcasts, and however large the number of Gentiles who had converted to Judaism, the majority of the Jewish people consisted of Jews who had been born into the faith and nurtured on it. Not so however with the Christian community which the Gospel of John bespeaks. This community consisted predominately of Gentiles who laid claim to being the true Israel because they had come to believe in the risen Christ while the Jews had not. Though in principle this should have made no difference, in fact it made a great deal of difference, because it meant that the constituents of this new Israel had had no experience of having belonged to the Israel which was being displaced. All that they knew was that Jesus had been rejected by His people and had been accepted by them. The Jesus of the Synoptics, who had come to bring the good news of

the coming of the Kingdom of God to His people, the Jesus who fits so tightly into the contours of real time and real space, one who heals the sick, exorcises the demon-haunted, and comforts the poor: a charismatic of flesh and blood even though He was to become more than he seemed to have been - this Jesus is dissolved in the Gospel of John into the divine light which should have been seen by the Jews but was not. It was the Jesus who had lived so that he might die and reveal the divine self that he had always been, through the medium of the resurrection. And since the Jews had failed to recognize the divine light while Jesus had been alive and had failed to recognize the divine light when he had been resurrected, what need was there for believing Gentiles to have any knowledge of the historical Jewish Jesus at all? A Christian community could thus lay claim to being the true Israel; could call upon Scriptures to justify these claims; and yet have no knowledge of what it was to have been born and raised as a Jew.

A community such as John's which needed nothing but the resurrection was an anomaly indeed. But its anomalous status does not extricate it from its rootage. It does not cease to be a mutation of Israel simply because it is a community consisting almost exclusively of Gentiles. This I think will become evident when we turn to Paul.

With Paul we are on more secure ground. By his own testimony, he had been born a Jew, and a precocious one at that. He had been, as to Law a Pharisee and as to righteousness under the Law, blameless. Indeed he had prided himself on having been more advanced in Judaism than others his own age, so zealous had he been for the traditions of the Fathers. This precociousness and zeal had gone hand in hand with Paul's violent persecution of the Church.

How then did Paul, the zealous champion of the two-fold Law come to Christ? He came to Christ because He saw Jesus Christ risen from the dead,

not because he wanted to see him risen, but because he could not help seeing him resurrected and alive. What Paul had thought was a blasphemous claim had been transformed for him into an undeniable fact. He had been wrong, grievously so. Having witnessed with his own eyes the risen Christ, Paul had to bring his conception of Judaism into line with this astonishing fact.

Paul's conception of Judaism had been that conception which had been taught by the Scribes-Pharisees. It was the Judaism of the two-fold Law and it was the Judaism that preached eternal life for the soul and the resurrection of the body. It was a form of Judaism which rejected the Judaism of the Sadducees as spurious and heretical, and it was a form of Judaism which was incongruent with the Hellenistic form of Judaism flourishing in Philo's Alexandria. It was a form of Judaism whose leaders were teachers and not prophets. It was, in fact, a form of Judaism which was mutational, even though for Paul and the Scribes-Pharisees it was believed to have been designed at Sinai. When, therefore, Paul was zealously persecuting the followers of Jesus for claiming that Jesus had risen from the dead and was the Christ, he was persecuting them, not as a Sadducee, or as a Philonic philosopher, or as a prophet, but as a follower of the Pharisees and as a preacher of the good news of eternal life and resurrection, beliefs which were in Paul's day still being denounced as heretical by the Sadducees. As a teacher of the two-fold Law and as a preacher of eternal life and resurrection, Paul was absolutely convinced that the resurrection of the dead was not only possible, but inevitable for those who adhered to the two-fold Law and who listened to the teachings of the Scribes-Pharisees. For Paul then the issue had never been whether Jesus could have been resurrected, as it would have been for a Sadducee, but whether he had been resurrected. When therefore Paul persecuted those who were preaching the risen Christ, he was not persecuting

them because they believed that there would be a resurrection, but because they claimed that Jesus had been resurrected and that this resurrection was proof positive that Jesus must be the Christ.

For Paul this was an impossibility, since Jesus had during his lifetime challenged the Scribes-Pharisees and had refused to knuckle under to their authority. How then could Jesus have been resurrected when a precondition for resurrection was the acknowledgment of the authority of the Scribes-Pharisees to determine what was right law and what was right doctrine? Since the answer to this question was that Jesus could not have been resurrected, Paul acted accordingly and sought to root out the preachers of this blasphemous heresy. But when he himself saw the risen Christ, he was forced to face the implications of this fact, -- and face it he did.

Since, Paul reasoned, Jesus had risen from the dead even though Jesus had challenged the Scribes-Pharisees during his lifetime, the teachings of the Pharisees must be seriously flawed. Adherence to the two-fold Law could not in and of itself guarantee eternal life and resurrection, since Jesus had risen from the dead even though he had defied the authoritative teachers of the two-fold Law. The road to resurrection therefore could not be the road of the Law, but a road marked out by the resurrection of Jesus and its meaning.

For Paul this meaning was to be found in a weakness inherent, not in the Law itself, but in the human condition. The Law is indeed divine and good, but the individual is a slave of sin. The Law may temporarily damn up the impulse to sin, but sooner or later sin will have its way. Indeed, the Law lends itself to manipulation by sin, since the "Thou shalt nots" of the Law only goad our sinful impulses to respond defiantly with "Thou shalt." The Law thus serves as an

agent provocateur of sin. To look to the Law for salvation is to be put off guard, since it diverts us from focusing on sin and its power and on our human condition and its helplessness.

This then must be the meaning of the resurrection. God, knowing of man's helplessness in the face of sin, sent Jesus Christ so that, through his death and through his resurrection, man might dissolve his sinful impulses in response to Christ's unconditional love. Whereas the Law provokes sin, Christ's love dissolves it.

It is here, in Paul's radical critique of the Law, that Jews and Christians have tended to see the parting of the ways. And with good reason. For if the Law is the essence of Judaism, then it would follow that Paul's rejection of the Law would ipso facto be a rejection of Judaism.

But, is the Law the essence of Judaism? This is the root question, which we must now seek an answer.

At first glance, the answer would seem to be obvious enough. Paul stresses in both Phillipians and Galatians his precocious relationship to the Law. In Romans, Chapter 7, he clearly identifies the Law as having been essential to Judaism prior to the resurrection of Jesus. But a more penetrating analysis does not yield so clear cut a conclusion. For though it is indeed true that for the Scribes-Pharisees adherence to the two-fold Law was essential for salvation, and for the Sadducees the adherence to the literal commands of the Pentateuch was a sine qua non, it had not been all true for such prophets as Amos, Hosea, Micah, and Isaiah. These prophets regarded righteousness, justice, and lovingkindness as the essence of God's covenant with Israel and not the Law. Not a single one of these prophets even mentions Sinai. Not a single one of these prophets

recalls Moses as a lawgiver. Not a single one of these prophets regarded sacrifices as mandatory: "I hate your Sabbaths, I despise your feasts, and I reject your sacrifices, but let justice roll down like water and righteousness like an everlasting stream," is the leit motif first enunciated by Amos. For prophets such as these, the Sabbath, the festivals and the cultus were allowable so long as they did not deflect the people from what was essential to the covenant; namely God's singularity, God's attributes (justice, mercy and lovingkindness) and Israel's commitment to this God and to His attributes.

The teachings of these grand prophets thus preclude the Law as being essential to the covenant, however important the Law became for subsequent forms of Judaism, But is this not also evident from the fact that the Written Law, the Pentateuch is a radically different Law than the two-fold Law proclaimed by the Scribes-Pharisees? One has only to flip through the titles of the tractates of the Mishnah to become aware that this repository of the Oral Law deals with categories of law, such as Berakhot, (blessings), Ketuboth (marriage contracts), Yedayim (uncleanness of hands), erubin (Sabbath limits) which are not even mentioned in the Pentateuch. After all there would have been no point for Paul to have prided himself on having been "As to the Law a Pharisee," if there was only one Law to which all Jews adhered. Thus not only do the prophets such as Amos, testify to the fact that the essence of the covenant was not law, but the fact that there could be such a cleavage as to what the Law was, a cleavage which during the reign of Alexander Janneus, pitted the Pharisees and Sadducees against one another in a savage civil war, clearly reveals that the Law was a superimposition, not an essence. Both before the Law and beyond the Law, the essence of Judaism continued to be as it was for the prophets: God's singularity and His attributes of justice, mercy, and lovingkindness.

But it is not only retrospectively that we discern a form of Judaism, namely the prophetic, which did not acknowledge the Law as the essence of the religion of Israel, but in the existence of a form of Judaism in our own day which likewise does not regard the Law as the essence of Judaism. This form of Judaism is flourishing, and its seminary, the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, trains rabbis for Reform congregations both in the United States and abroad. There can be no question that this seminary is a seminary devoted to the teaching and the perpetuation of Judaism. It may be denounced as a seedbed of heresy by the ultra-Orthodox, it may even be viewed by them as worse than a Christian seminary, but it is regarded by friend and foe alike as a Jewish institution. Yet Reform Judaism does not recognize the binding character of either the Written or Oral Law, nor the Orthodox claims that God had revealed his total revelation to Moses on Sinai. Instead, Reform Judaism affirms that God's revelation is ongoing, and that the essence of Judaism is to be found in the singularity of God and in His attributes of justice, mercy, and lovingkindness.

Reform Judaism thus bears witness to the fact that Pharisaism was not the last mutation - revelation in Judaism. For Reform Judaism is as legitimate a mutation - revelation for Jews who acknowledge it as such, as were the Pentateuchal and Pharisaic mutations - revelations for those Jews who adopted these mutation - revelations as normative. If then Reform Judaism can be Judaism without the Law, the Law cannot be the essence of Judaism for those who have adopted Reform Judaism as normative. And if there can be a Judaism unrooted in the Law in our own day, by what right can I as a Reform Jew read Paul out of Judaism merely because in his day Jews believed that the Law was the essence of Judaism? So long

as Paul insisted, as he did, that the Christ was sent by the one God of Israel to redeem humankind from the bondage of sin, and so long as he justified his revelation of Christ by an appeal to Scriptures, and so long as he proclaimed that the followers of Christ were the Israel of the spirit, I see no way of denying to Paul's teachings the right to be categorized as a mutation - revelation of Judaism for all those Jews or Gentiles who accept these teachings as normative, without at the same time denying, not only the right of Reform Judaism to be categorized, as a mutation - revelation, but of Orthodox Judaism as well -- a form of Judaism which owes its own legitimacy to a mutation - revelation. And as for Gentiles, there is in principle no way to exclude the possibility that a community of Israel could emerge consisting of a majority who were either converts themselves or the children of converts, unless there is some quota or cut-off point for new converts. In principle, even the most extreme Orthodox Rabbi cannot countenance such a quota or cut-off so long as the convert fulfills all the legal requirements. The fact then that Pauline Christianity spread almost exclusively among Gentiles does not in and of itself derogate from Pauline Christianity's right to be regarded as a mutation - revelation within Judaism, so long as the community affirms that it is the Israel of the spirit. Hence, when we read the Gospel of John and recognize that it is a Gospel that is speaking to a Christian community consisting of Gentiles, we are confronted by an anomaly, but not by a new religion. John may be addressing Gentiles, and he may be rejecting Jews, but he is not rejecting either the God of Israel or the authority of Scriptures. He is affirming that Jesus was a Jew in the flesh, that He was sent by God, the Father, to the Jews who failed to recognize him, and became the Christ for all those who did so recognize him either during His earthly sojourn or after His resurrection. The Jews were

not cut off from Christ; they cut themselves off. Christ did not come for the Gentiles but for all humankind. The fact that Gentiles and not Jews acknowledged Him as the Christ was simply a fact, not a destiny.

If then I read the New Testament as the record of a mutation-revelation within the framework of Judaism, what do I do with the hostility which suffuses the Gospels and the Epistles of Paul? What do I do with Matthew 23 and its condemnation of the Scribes-Pharisees as whitewashed tombs, vipers and sons of hell? How do I react to the trial and crucifiction of Jesus and the harsh judgment levelled against the Jews for their complicity?

I answer these questions by facing them head on. What, after all, is one to expect? Sweetness and light, genteel polemic, serene travail when a charismatic of charismatics challenges the authority of the Scribes-Pharisees, exposes the Jews to Roman wrath by preaching the coming of God's Kingdom and not the continuity of Caesar's Kingdom, attracts crowds who could go beserk, causes a rumpus in the Temple area in the midst of maddening crowds, evokes shouts of "Long live the King of Jews," "Long live the Son of David, Hossana in the highest," and neither affirms or denies that he is the King of the Jews?

These were harsh and unruly times. Judea had proved to be ungovernable. There was not a day without its violence, a week without its demonstrations, a year without its insurrections. The Roman emperors did not know how to keep the peace; the Procurators did not know how to keep the peace; the High Priest and his privy council did not know how to keep the peace. Repression did not work, permissiveness did not work, muddle did not work. When John the Baptist had preached repentance and baptism, he had been put to death, not because of his teachings, but because he attracted crowds, and

crowds were unpredictable and they were dangerous. Even those religious leaders, who, as in the case of John, may have been sympathetic to his religious revivalism, were frightened lest a naive charismatic unintentionally spark an insurrection which would lead to devasting reprisals on the entire people. Hence it is not surprising that everyone did what he did, because nobody knew what else to do.

In this maelstrom of violence and anarchy, no charismatic was likely to come out alive, least of all a gentle charismatic with no political ambitions, only a prophetic impulse to awaken his people to the coming of God's kingdom. To the degree that his teachings found a hearing and to the degree that his preachings attracted crowds of listeners, and to the degree that his wonder-working aroused awe, to that degree was he bound to attract the attention of the High Priest, appointed by the Procurator, and arouse his concern. All that was needed was some incident that spelled potential danger, and his fate was sealed.

For Jesus' disciples this fate was intolerable. Here was their gentle teacher being arrested by the orders of the High Priest, tried by the High Priest's council, and crucified by Pontius Pilate acting on the judgment of the High Priest and his council, and they, his disciples were to be unmoved? Seeing their teacher brutally crucified, were they to remain unbitter? Or were they to cry out in their pain and anguish and hit out at all those who had been in any way party to this gruesome deed?

And was not their bitterness compounded when bruised, stunned and bewildered by the seeming death of their beloved teacher, they saw Jesus risen from the dead, proclaimed the good news, and found themselves rebuked and hounded from the synagogue by the very Scribes-Pharisees who had taught

them to believe in the resurrection of the dead? How then can I be surprised if I find the Gospels full of bitterness, recrimination, and anathemas? After all if Jesus' disciples were human beings of flesh and blood, am I to expect them to respond to pain, anguish and harassment with divine transcendence? Not all. I would expect them to be angry, bitter, and vengeful as indeed the Gospels portray them as having been.

But their bitterness, their anger and vengefulness has nothing to do with anti-Semitism. Rather was it the normal by-product of mutation - revelations in Judaism, and in Christianity as well. We have evidence enough of this in the struggle between the Pharisees and the Sadducees. Not only did the Pharisees and Sadducees denounce each other as heretics, but they slugged it out in a bloody, generation-long civil war. And when the Pharisees regained power, they wreaked vengeance on Diogenes and others who had counselled Alexander Janneus to crucify 800 followers of the Pharisees.

In subsequent epochs, Rabbinates and Karaites, Maimanists and anti-Maimanists, Hasidim and Mitnagdim hurled vituperation at each other, read each other out of the faith, and would have translated their harsh words into violent deeds, if this option had been open to them.

And when we turn to the history of Christianity, is it not marked by violent confrontations between the followers of Christ? Is there any diatribe in the New Testament against the Scribes-Pharisees which has not been out done by Luther? Is there any act of harassment by the Scribes-Pharisees against the followers of Jesus more harassing than the decades of religious wars that followed on the Protestant Reformation? Yet such intense collisions are looked upon as intra-Christian struggles, and not as inter-religious struggles. So why should we

not look upon the collisions recorded in the New Testament as intra-Jewish collisions and not the collision of two separate religions?

When therefore I look at the New Testament I see a precious record of the birth of Judaism's fourth mutation - revelation, with all the travail that attends such a birth. And like the mutation - revelations which preceded it and the mutation - revelations which followed it, the New Testament seems to me to display two levels, divine light and the human prism. For like all previous revelations, I see this revelation too as being refracted through human prisms. As a consequence, the divine light is not simply reflected, but is fractured. What I find in the New Testament is a commingling of light and shadow; and it is this commingling which explains for me the ease with which anti-Semites have exploited the bitter, harsh, and vengeful sayings in the New Testament to justify the harassment and the persecution of the Jews through the centuries. Focusing on the Gospel accounts of the trial and crucifiction of Jesus, anti-Semites have been able to whip up the passions of the mob by accusing the Jews of being Christ killers, host desecraters, ritual murderers, well-poisoners and children of Satan. Confronted by such animus and hostility, proof-texted as it was from the New Testament, there could be no way that Jews could see any divine light emanating from a Christ imprisoned within texts bursting with hostility and vengefulness. Little wonder then that when I was growing up, Christ was an anathema and not a redeemer, the New Testament a blasphemy and not a revelation.

Despite these barriers, however, I found it possible through a deeper understanding of how God reveals Himself to Israel through mutation-revelations, each one of which showing itself to have been a commingling of divine light and human shadow, to vault over barriers and find, snuggling behind the hostility

and vengefulness, a Christ of compassion, graciousness and love. This Christ bore no resemblance to the Christ of hatred and vengeance. It was a Christ who forgave the Jews, because they did not know what they were doing. It was this Christ that in some way may have been reaching out to me when, puffed with pride and righteousness, I was terrified by the unwilled thought, "What if Paul was right," and was confronted with the haunting possibility that deep within me was an impulse to defy the Law which might prove to be more powerful than the impulse to obey it.

But I did not become a Christian even when I did part from the Law, and even when I concluded that the New Testament was a mutation - revelation within Judaism, and that Paul's radical critique of the Law and his proclamation that the true Israel was the Israel of the spirit and not of the flesh, were as legitimate an expression of Judaism's quest for the fullness of God as the Pharisaic proclamation that God had given two Laws not one. I did not become a Chrstian because to have done so would have deprived me of the revelations which had preceded the rise of Christianity and the revelations which were to follow. I would have cut myself off from a divine odyssey which reaches back to the patriarchs and which reaches forward to the messianic age, an odyssey of a people ever searching for the fullness of God. It is a odyssey which a people, of flesh and spirit undergoes, and it is this odyssey that is for Jews, such as myself, the ultimate revelation. For what we find spread before us is a record of continuous revelation, to and through the Jews -- revelations through prophets, through books, through Scribes-Pharisees, through philosophers, through Christ-Jesus, through rationalists, through Kabbalists, through charismatics, through reformers, and even through Jewish secularists and nationalists.

And all to what end? To make manifest through the history of a people God's faith in humankind's capacity for shaping a world which God can pronounce as good, very good indeed. For if we open our Bibles to the first verses of Genesis, we read that God created heaven and earth, and all that is therein and that He capped His creation with a single individual, formed in His image and after His likeness, an individual whom God entrusted with His goodly creation. God looked upon the whole world He had created as goodly, and not just some special land or territory, or place. He had also created a single individual, male and female, and not a multitude of people. And this individual was not an Egyptian, or a Babylonian, or a Frenchman, or an American or a Jew. He was just an individual, like God was an individual, but what an individual, created as he was in the image of God! God's commitment was thus not to a race or nation or class or mob, but to the individual.

And God put this individual into a paradise which the individual had not earned but which would provide him with every good, without effort, provided that he foreswore knowledge and responsibility for making religious, moral and ethical choices.

This the individual was unable to do. Therefore God cast him out of Paradise and plunged him into history, where he might strive to regain Paradise by refining his religious, moral and ethical choices.

But when it became evident that human beings were not at all choosing wisely, God, as a decision of last resort, decided to experiment with a single people and chose Abraham to father a nation which would keep alive the belief in the one God who had created a goodly universe, who had capped His creation with an individual in his own image and after His own likeness, and who had given this individual and his descendents the power to discriminate between good and evil.

This people, which Abraham fathered, was thus launched by God on an odyssey which could not come to an end until humankind had so refined its religious sensitivities that it would freely choose good over evil and regain for itself a paradise which this time it had earned through pain, suffering, anguish and knowledge. Throughout the centuries this people of God clung to their faith and they clung to their hopes, however tempestuous the waters and however crushing the breakers. This they were able to do because they were continuously being buoyed up by revelations which assured them that God still cared and that God would not totally abandon them, even when they seemed to be abandoning Him.

Among the revelations along the way was the revelation which has come down to us in the New Testament. It was a divine revelation, a revelation which vividly personified God's loving compassion for every individual, but it was a revelation which because few Jews were able to see it as such, found its home among the Gentiles. For the first time in all of Israel's history, a revelation of God to His people had brought life and light to Gentiles who had known Him not, but who knew Him now -- and another people of God was launched on its odyssey with its own unique and special destiny.

But the Jews persisted in their own uniqueness, and continued to spawn revelations, revelations which sustained their faith and their hope even when, as a tiny minority among Christians and Moslems, (who in affirming Islam, were in their own unique way, bearing witness to still another mutation) continuously being mocked for their stubbornness and persecuted for their stiffneckness. They gave the lie, however, to their detractors by continuing to bear spiritual fruit: two Talmuds, Midrash, Commentaries without end, ethical treatises, mystical probings, philosophic forays, liturgical gems, and poetic flights.

The Jewish people were sustained by revelations in the modern age as well, as gifted religious leaders, teachers and philosophers searched for more of God and found it. They did not fall prey to secularism, nor were they stripped of their religious questing by the triumphs of Jewish nationalism -- a nationalism whose own claims to nationhood are gleaned from God-saturated Scriptures, and whose enduring national heritage from the past are spiritual and not political triumphs. So sturdy indeed is this people of God that not even the Holocaust could burn out its spirit.

The Jewish people is thus very much alive today, for, it seems to me, that their divine odyssey is not yet at an end. Humankind has still not recognized that God is one, that His universe is a goodly one, and that every individual is created in His image and after His likeness. The end of days, which the prophets preached, is still far off. The meaning of the Jewish odyssey has yet to be assimilated. Paradise has not yet been regained. A re-genesis still eludes us. The need of Israel for multiple revelations is still manifest to those Jews, like myself, who see and feel this need.

This then explains how I, a Jew, can look at the New Testament and read it as a record of a revelation -- mutation and yet not become a Christian. For whereas a true Christian is totally fulfilled in Christ and needs no other revelation, I cannot be so fulfilled. I cannot be so fulfilled because I have become convinced that so long as God reveals Himself through human instruments, every revelation is partial. I therefore feel the need for all the revelations that were given to Israel in the past, all the revelations which are being given to Israel in the present, and all the revelations which may be given to Israel in the future, until, the ushering in of the Messianic age, give us, at long last, the fullness of God.

Convinced that until that end of days the divine light will always be refracted through human prisms, and convinced at the same time that the divine light will always be straining to break through, I do not wish to have the light streaming towards me and yet see it not.

BIBLICAL SOCIAL ETHICS: AN AGENDA FOR THE EIGHTIES

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I speak tonight for what I believe is a moral minority. I can imagine no better time for representatives of that minority to ponder the moral agenda of the 1980's than in the second week of Advent and on the eighth day of Hanukkah, the Feast of Lights. In that week Christians remember John the Baptist laying the ax at the root of the tree of greed, oppression, and ethnic nationalism and calling upon all humankind (including Roman soldiers) to repent and believe the good news that the kingdom of God is at hand. And on that day, Jews everywhere commemorate the cleansing and rededication of the temple by Judas Maccabeus, in symbols of not only memory but hope. The hope is that the arm of the almighty, whose mercy endures forever, will open the gates of righteousness (Psalm 118:1-4, 19). "And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day and shall be my people," Zechariah's prophecy declares, "not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." (Zechariah 3:11, 4:6)

No theme persists with more precision and intensity in the Hebrew and Christian scriptures and in the teachings of Mishnah and Talmud than the right-making power of Hesed, that is, loyalty or ethical love to God and to one's fellow human beings. The definition of that "steadfast love," or faithfulness, is rooted in the character of God that is revealed

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in both Testaments. In biblical terms, loving other persons as you love yourself is the moral expression of loving God with all your heart and soul and strength.

All else in biblical ethics flows from this. In the book of Deuteronomy as in the teachings of Jesus, the only way to justify the possession of power (whether political, economic, cultural or familial) is to exercise it on behalf of the oppressed. Wealth, including land, is not properly owned, but held; and its stewardship is to be discharged in a community of mutual care. The congregation of the righteous, whether Jewish or Christian, exists by virtue of its mission to set wrongs right. In that congregation's incarnation of Torah all the nations of the world will be blessed.

Jesus of Nazareth meant precisely what he said in the words, "I have not come to destroy the law but to fulfill it." Like many rabbis of his time, he understood the law ethically, following the prophets Hosea and Micah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, and both the first and second Isaiahs. All these spoke of God's judgment and faithfulness while the kingdoms of Israel and Judah were passing into captivity. A Jew from Tarsus shared that understanding fully when he declared, as both Moses and Jesus did, that love is the fulfilling of the law (Roman 13:10). "Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath," Paul wrote; "if your enemy is hungry, feed him"(Roman 12:19-20, citing Lev. 19:18, Deut. 32:35, Proverbs 25:21). A thousand rabbis were saying the same things in congregations of Jews scattered all over the Roman Empire.

What Jesus brought and St. Paul taught was not a new ethical standard but the promise of power from the Spirit of God to keep the old one. Paul's summary of his Epistle to the Romans was, I believe, what he also thought was a summary of the promise of the new age and the new covenant in the prophecies of Zechariah, Jeremiah and Joel. The kingdom of God, Paul wrote, is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Presence of the Lord, that is, in the "hallowing" or "right-making" Spirit.

John Wesley once wrote that when the Hebrew adjective [translated "holy" in the Scriptures is applied to divinity, it has the force of an active verb. God's holiness, so far as we can know it, is expressed in setting the children of his Covenant straight. That is what constitutes salvation, in both the Old and the New Testament. The judgments of the Lord are true and right-making altogether. Be ye holy for the Lord your God is holy, both prophets and apostles said--meaning by those words, be ethically righteous. Rudolph Otto's concept of what he called the numinous, the psychic and spiritual experience of the presence of God, is not in Hebrew or Christian faith a substitute but a foundation for ethics; our God is a consuming fire.

Christians and Jews, then, share a common heritage of law as ethical love. Alas, they also share a common history of temptation to substitute outward forms of legalism for the inner realities of loyalty. For Christians, that temptation has also included the inward substitute for loyalty proffered by an antinomian conception of grace. But the teachings of

the new Testament will not allow it. The law is holy, just and good, St. Paul wrote; and St. Peter chose from the opening words of Moses' summary of the Ten Commandments in Leviticus, his text, "be holy, for the Lord your God is holy." (Lev. 19:2; I Peter 1:16).

The social ethic of evangelical Protestants, reflected historically in moments of obedience as well as of what was acknowledged in retrospect as gross disobedience, has always rested upon these Hebraic elements in New Testament religion. Consider, for example, the ethic of work. John Calvin did not invent it; and it is a libel on Jews, to say nothing of hard-working Orthodox Greeks and Polish Catholics, to call it "the Protestant" ethic. Calvin discovered honesty, industry, and self-restraint in the Bible--in the book of the Proverbs and the epistles of St. Paul. And like Calvinists since, he found ample warning against overdoing it in the account of the Feast of Tabernacles and the story of Mary and Martha.

The idea of a Christian commonwealth in Puritan England and colonial New England was likewise Hebraic to the core. The metaphors of exodus, pilgrimage and promised land were pervasive. Chosenness, in Massachusetts Bay as in Ancient Israel, implied mission, not privilege--or, perhaps I should say, the privilege of a mission destined to bless all humankind. John Winthrop's assumption that the magistrates were the Lord's anointed, responsible to protect the widows and the fatherless and to prevent the oppression of the poor, shaped

the Puritan theocracy. The clergy, like their counterparts in Ancient Israel, the priests and prophets, were advisors to the magistrates, who held power as stewards of the God of justice, peace, and love. In Pennsylvania a bit later, the communitarian idealism of Quakers, Mennonites, Brethren and Moravians was rooted in the scriptural sensibility that had given the City of Brotherly Love its name. After 1730 the Evangelical Awakening spread across the Atlantic world, from New Brunswick and Northampton in America, and Halle and Herrnhut in Germany, to London and Bristol and back again. Its leaders in both Europe and America--John Wesley, George Whitefield, Jonathan Edwards, and Count Zinzendorf--proclaimed in Hebraic terms the responsibility of Christians to place human society as well as their individual lives under the law of the Lord, and so to spread scriptural righteousness over the land.

True, the moral minority of committed believers in Revolutionary America never thought the republic was at its outset a righteous one; but they wanted it to become so. Even in the confines of their Protestant perspective, however, that did not mean an English style of ethnocentric chosenness. During the half-century preceding the war for independence, churchmen in the Middle Colonies of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland caught the vision of a religiously plural society, even though a Protestant and Christian one. Whether Dutch Reformed, Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, German Lutherans, Welsh Quakers, English Methodists and Baptists, or

Rhineland Mennonites and Brethren, the diverse settlers slowly became aware that they all defined goodness in biblical terms and shared similar biblical hopes for a just society. Although each group survived in the American wilderness by developing a passion to win adult converts, and each in one way or another absorbed the evangelical idea that individuals should be born again by the power of the Spirit of God, the social and ethical goals of evangelism and Christian experience were Hebraic. Their vision was not a restoration of Nathan's Israel with an anointed David at its head, of course. That vision had long since faded away, even in New England. Rather, they saw themselves, and the new nation, called to become a people of Jeremiah's new covenant, a moral minority, a leaven in the lump. Jeremiah's ethics of exile, as I have called it, defined their duty to create a righteous society by personal example and spiritual leadership, without relying on the state either to sustain or restrain any form of religious commitment.

To be sure, the framers of the American Constitution, like the clergymen and the tiny group of rabbis of that day, were profoundly distrustful of human nature and convinced of the pervasiveness of original sin. But by the turning of Thomas Jefferson's century, the confidence was growing that a new age was dawning, especially in America, and that in the "last days" the Holy One of Israel would pour out of his Spirit on all flesh.

This renewal of messianic and millennial visions of a world-wide kingdom of <u>shalom</u> shaped the moral aspirations of

Victorian society on both sides of the Atlantic. We know, or at least I know, very little yet of the ways in which this biblical vision led Jews in America to share the optimism of the nineteenth century. But we all know its impact upon leaders of every evangelical Protestant community in the young nation, from Francis Asbury and Lyman Beecher to Alexander Campbell and Charles G. Finney. All of these understood conversion to begin the process by which God would write his Torah in human hearts, and so bring about a real change in persons. And all of them affirmed both the necessity and the promise that that same law be incarnated in the customs, statutes and institutions of society. Methodists, I believe, played a crucial role in helping evangelicals assimilate the biblical doctrine that law and love are one, and that the individual righteousness that flows from covenant faith is a redemptive force in society as well.

The combination of these hopes and convictions with the equally intense affirmation of liberty of conscience and freedom of religious choice kindled the mid-nineteenth-century movement for social reform in both the United States and Great Britain. I have chronicled its Protestant aspects in my book Revivalism and Social Reform. From that era to this, Christians and Jews in America have found both inspiration and guidance from their scriptures to challenge the institutions of society that compounded the miseries of the poor, oppressed and enslaved Black people, restrained the creative powers of women, and denied justice to workers. In Woodrow Wilson's progressive era, the social

gospel's renunciation of evil, as well as its call to spiritual commitment to the kingdom of God, drew not only upon the words of Jesus but upon the passages from Deuteronomy and the Prophets in which they were rooted. The most radical of the Christian socialists, George D. Herron, focused every one of his college lectures on The Social Meanings of Religious Experiences upon texts from the books of Moses.

The link between the social ethics of Judaism and Christianity is especially clear in the way Black ministers, converted in slavery or under the shadow of it, perceived Christian theology. White slaveowners and their wives, and white ministers, thought Black people possessed only a child-like intelligence, so they told them Bible stories. Spared the interminable logic by which both rabbis and clergymen often obscured the saving truths of Scripture, Black converts grasped the messages that lay in the stories themselves, as ancient Jews and early Christians had done. And they received those truths in the context of their own incredible experience of hearing and embracing faith in the justice and love of God from Christians who held them in slavery! Their masters told them the story of Moses and the law, with obedience in mind. Listening Blacks understood obedience biblically; it was grounded in thankfulness for the goodness of the One who found his people slaves in Egypt and led them first to freedom and then into covenant with him. Slave ministers loved the story of Jonah because he declared, unwillingly, that God was gracious not only to Jews but also to the people of Ninevah and, therefore,

to Black Africans and all the rest of humanity. They found in Job's sufferings a foreshadowing of theirs, and in his hold upon a faith that transcended the tragedies of time a foundation for their hopes in both this world and the next. The story of Mary and her baby, and of a dying Son of God, had no anti-Semitic overtones for Negro Christians at all; it bespoke rather a God whose suffering love would at last triumph in justice, on earth as in heaven.

The profundity of nineteenth-century Black preachers, as of Jewish theology since the Holocaust, lay in their deep wrestling with the actuality of incredible evil standing over against the biblical declaration of the goodness of God. Black people never needed a social gospel. For in their first as in their latest encounter with the teachings of the Bible, whatever good news there was at all was social. It acknowledged the mystery of corporate sin and declared the wonder of an individual salvation which bound them, as it ought to bind all human beings, in forgiving and creative love.

In the face of such insight, I have in recent years found the traditional interpretations of the rise of the Social Gospel even less satisfactory than before. Liberal Christians and progressive historians have thought it stemmed from the new social sciences, the Marxist critique of capitalsm, evolutionary thought, and historical criticism of the Bible. But the arguments by which such diverse Christian radicals as William Booth, Walter Rauschenbusch and John A. Ryan condemned the existing order as well as their proposals for its redemption were rooted

in the ethical teachings of the Old and New Testaments. This rooting Solomon Schechter, founder of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, understood very well. By contrast, Christian or Jewish modernists were never social radicals. Their position was, in fact, a model for twentieth-century culture religion; for they made culture itself both source and standard for faith and ethics.

If the foregoing summary is correct, the moral confusions of what passes for Biblical faith in the year 1980, whether among Jews or Christians, will be comprehensible only as you keep in mind what is new to the twentieth century and what is old. Religious modernism, of course, is new; so is its claim to have parented social idealism. New also to popular consciousness is the secularization of art and learning, of psychology and sociology. The long term result was to undermine the ideals of fundamental law, individual virtue and marital fidelity that have ordered public and private life for generations.

Widespread social despair is also new, as commentators upon it since the 1950's have said again and again. It was nurtured in the maddening acceleration of social change in the early part of the century and the tragedies of war, and depression. Thereafter, it was fed by the rebirth of racist nationalism in Nazi Germany, the explosion of the Second War, the horrors of the Holocaust, and the revelation at Hiroshima of the possibility of a world-wide holocaust that would decimate all peoples and contaminate all nature. The monster

of death and despair, as Robert Lifton has shown in so many moving ways, has laid dark hands upon all human hopes.

New religious developments in both evangelicalism and Judaism have contributed to the confused sense of hopelessness. Among these was the dispensational constriction of Christian hope that stemmed from both popular Jewish messianism and the spread among Protestants of the millenarian views of the Plymouth Brethren. Gershom Scholem has powerfully depicted the late medieval roots of the former. Tourists to Israel sometimes encounter its living vestiges in Mea Shearim, or Safed. Both sets of ideas contributed to the rise of Zionism, but in ways that do not satisfy either the religious or the secular ideologies dominant in Israel today. Novel also, at least in its political application, was the spiritualizing of the idea of the religious congregation and the confinement of its social duty to sectarian boundaries. Equally ennervating was the revival of an ancient preoccupation with the words rather than with the saving meanings of the Book to whose authority over faith and morals increasing thousands gave allegiance. The marriage of the dogma of individualism with the doctrine of the covenanted community, among both evangelical Fundamentalists and some elements of Orthodox and Hassidic Jewry, was one outcome of the effort to clothe that new dogma in the vestments of old time religion.

All these new factors sustained what I have concluded was the great sea-change in the religion of the twentieth as compared with the previous two centuries, namely, its pervasive

antinomianism. The wholesale desertion of the idea of inward and radical obedience to Torah--the law of the Lord that St. Paul, following Jesus, had proclaimed to be holy, just and good--corrupted every Jewish and Christian tradition. The moral retreat took diverse paths, whether of externalized legalism or an internalized dogma of justification by faith alone; of a sacramental church or a ritually traditional synagogue; or of an unworldly and therefore, it was alleged, more godly spirituality. One symptom of moral declension is that the present generation of Christian scholars in Bible and theology received calmly and subsequently ignored the disclosure of the scandalous private life of two of the twentieth century's greatest theologians. Such a response betrays little commitment to the prophecies of either Zechariah or Zacharius. Both Amos and James the brother of Jesus w uld seem a moral minority here.

The primary agenda for the 1980's in both Jewish and evangelical social ethics, therefore, is the reconstruction of biblical faith and hope in a despairing age. Without it, the love which the authors of Psalms 113 to 118 and the first letter to the Corinthians say is eternal can have only limited temporal significance.

The ethical renewal which depends upon that reconstruction is indeed urgent. Consider the following agenda for a Biblical social morality which I think ought in the 1980's to claim the loyalty of those whose faith is being revived, whether they represent a majority or only a minority of morally concerned persons. I speak from

an evangelical perspective, grounded in the history of the past two hundred years, to be sure. But I see no need at all to distinguish the moral commitments I think appropriate for Christians just now from those that most of you would identify as marks of faithfulness among Jews.

Like many others, I have been moved by certain moral preoccupations that became prominent in the 1970's: abortion; sexual licentiousness; the pollution of the environment; the oppression of women; the computerized bureaucratic assault upon personhood; the theft of savings perpetrated by runaway inflation; and the financial corruption of the democratic process. I am persuaded, however, that any reasoned survey of the problems of the human race in a world that has become a neighborhood would rank the ethical significance of every one of these new issues somewhere below the old ones. The persisting moral challenges that the nineteenth century Christians and Jews found central in the Scriptures, and which the Communist ideology in its original form professed to offer a cure, remain the critical ones: the distress of the poor, crying for bread, shelter and decent employment; the oppression of the weak by those who think power their right and privilege rather than an entrusted obligation; racial discrimination, especially racist nationalism, whether claiming to be justified by religion or not; and the violence which, in war as in private crime, attests the dehumanization of modern culture.

Much of the appeal of the new ethical issues is to the self-interest of the affluent populations of the industrial

free world, especially the United States. Their advocacy turns our attention inward, upon our own prosperity and privilege; and it provides a blanket of self-righteousness to insulate us from the depths of human suffering around the world. Much of that suffering seems to stem from as well to perpetuate our abundance. Our current preoccupation with survival, by which we too often mean the survival of our privileged status, ignores the fact that despite war, depression and holocaust we have survived, ¶ with a success bordering on the obscene. ¶ Meanwhile, helpless peoples in Africa and Southern Asia fall victims of more desperate hunger, more inhuman violence, and more insolently racist warfare than Europe and America, which for a time seemed to make these evils a trademark, ever dreamed. A conscientious embrace of the notion of a common humanity forbids us to suppose that the victims in the barrios of Bogota and Rio, in the desert of the Ogaden or in the jungles of Laos have somehow brought their fates upon themselves. They did not <u>choose</u> to be born in cultures weak in progressive idealism and the commitment to equal justice that Hebrew and Christian faith have generally fostered.

(no ¶) In us, God promised, they too are heirs of <u>shalom</u>-- ¶ wholeness, righteousness, health, peace. ¶ The moral minority of Jews and Christians who have in the twentieth century sought to create a world order grounded in the righteousness intended for "the healing of the nations" must realize that the evils that have afflicted the whole world are deeply rooted

in our own cultures. Judaism and Christianity both affirmed the dignity of toil, and the entitlement of the laborer, whether skilled or unskilled, professional, farmer or merchant prince -- to a decent return for his or her work. Both affirmed that economic benefit is generally a product of individual and social righteousness. How easy it has been for us to forget that such wealth and property as did flow from the cultural heritage of Torah and Atoning Grace was in both Testaments forbidden fruit if eaten for our own pleasure or power. Neither Christians nor Jews should forget that when Jesus said "The poor you always have with you," he was quoting the book of Deuteronomy, in one of the Old Testament's sharpest delineations of the obligations of those who hold wealth to those who do not. Nor should we forget that the oppressive use of political and military power is as intertwined with the history of Hebrew and Christian poeples as are the persistent denunciations of it by prophets and apostles. This evil has been pervasive in all times and all cultures, to be sure. But what Westerner can forget Commodore Perry's instruction of the Japanese in the use of force, or the example English troops first set for the peoples of China, India and Arabia, whose current quest of nuclear weapons we deplore. President Richard Nixon and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger awakened Laotians to economic and political aspirations which that quiet people then sought to fulfill with archaic Communism. The resulting racial suicide we now witness with horror. And at this moment, all around the

world, most notably in Latin America and the Near East, the sale of American arms to friends, and to both the friends and enemies of our earlier friends, has sown the dragon's teeth. The proliferation of the nuclear weapons we invented and first employed at Hiroshima and Nagasaki has now become, as President Jimmy Carter correctly put it, the gravest of many threats to human survival.

To speak of this is to remember also the Jewish and Christian contributions to the religiously-sanctioned racism that now stokes the furnaces of militarist nationalism everywhere. Our collective heritage is to have known commonwealths that nurtured justice and human dignity, to have recognized the God of creation as the Lord of our own natures, and to have seen out of both divine and human choosing a vision of universal peace and justice. Today, however, in Israel as in the United States, the covenant of servitude and accountability has been prostituted to privilege; and the alleged transcendent worth of national survival is used to justify oppression. Morroccan Jews in Israel, to say nothing of Israeli Arabs, know this quite as well as Black evangelicals in Mobile or Minneaplois.

Precisely because we are akin in the sin of having failed to keep the vision of justice clearly before us, I think, Jews and evangelicals need each other deeply just now. Only so can we effectively resist those who, in the name of morality in both Israel and the United States, are now wrapping a

narrow and self-serving ethic in the flag of their nation, and arguing that group survival is an ultimate human value.

I urge no cheap grace here, nor call for acquiescence in racist or nationalist terrorism that claims to promote justice for the oppressed. Much realistic moral thought, however, lay back of the earlier formulation of the ideology of the state of Israel. Some of it stemmed from reflections on the Holocaust by psychiatrists, sociologists, political scientists, and theologians who were profoundly sensitive to the meanings, both immanent and transcendent, of Jewish culture and peoplehood in human history. I need not analyze that ethical ideology here in any detail. Its principal points were: to deal in radical justice with the peoples who in recent centuries had inhabited the land of Israel; to resist the clinically verified compulsion to adopt the ways of one's own oppressors in relationships with the weak; to make religious commitment an unfettered personal decision in an explicitly religious state, in the confidence (justified by later events) that secularized Jews would embrace one or another version of the faith of believing Jews when they returned to the land of their fathers; and finally, in a commitment to collective welfare that was more biblical than Marxist, to renounce economic oppression of not only fellow Jews but of Islamic and Christian neighbors.

No thoughtful evangelical can be ungrateful for the warnings issued recently by such Jews as Marc Tannenbaum against the potential danger of the movement that in recent months has

claimed the name "Moral Majority." He and many others have done so knowing full well that some of the most uncompromising support for Israeli foreign policy comes from dispensational Fundamentalists in that self-styled majority. The latter have concluded in their biblically literal way, as some Jews have, that God's covenant with ethnic and political Israel is irrevocable, and that to support all the policies of its reconstituted government is surely to be on the right side at Armageddon. Sensitive Jews, however, have strong reasons to question the morality of the majorities of our time. I ask both Jews and evangelicals, then, to consider how the spirit of hard-lining nationalism, whether Israeli, or American and pro-Israeli, is the same as that which, in Argentina and Iran now, and in Nicaragua and other places lately, yields oppressive and racist violence in God's name. It mocks the Third Commandment, I believe; and it reflects the same spirit that originally pervaded national socialism in Germany, when Adolf Hitler cast it as a Christian crusade against Communism.

Christians and Jews who share a deeply-felt commitment to the ethics of the prophets have an obligation to bear witness to each other. Certainly I must do so here, appealing not only to Jesus and Paul, whom you Jews honor, but also to Micah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, the rabbis of the Diaspora and the Essenes of Khumram, whom you may, understandably, honor more.

Without imposing upon you the whole of Jeremiah's denial of the permanence of the covenant with the Kingdom of

Judah and with David's royal line, I ask you to think afresh about that prophet's declaration that the survival of the Jewish nation and people was not dependent upon the perpetuation of the throne of David on Mount Zion. He declared instead that Torah would only bring life, for Israel and for all humanity, if its truth were received in a covenant of the heart's intent and not simply the culture's compulsion. That Jeremiah stood on Micah's ground is evident from the successful use of the argument that he did by his defenders at the trial for sedition that nearly cost his life. The second Isaiah also saw the vision of a peaceable kingdom. When it came, all the nations of the world and the islands of the sea would see the light of the glory of the Lord risen upon Israel; and the sound of violence would no more be heard in the land. The same vision is clear in a thousand Jewish readings of the history of the prophets. America's religious liberty, grounded as it is in a deep recognition of the right of individuals and groups to choose their beliefs and moral commitments, stemmed directly from the ethics of exile that Jeremiah proclaimed.

Why should this city be laid in ruins and these fields and vineyards burned up, Jeremiah reasoned. He advised submission, even to the evil in the rule of the king of Babylon. He believed that God meant it, as He did Joseph's enslavement, for the good of His people, and that the Holy One of Israel does not countenance injustice. Renew your hearts in repentance for violating the principles of love and justice that permeate the Torah, Jeremiah cried; for the hope of a renewed Israel, own the

new covenant of individual as well as of corporate accountability.

I am not now asking you to consider either the modern Jewish or the modern Christian understanding of the meaning of Jeremiah's new covenant, but the understanding of it that eventually prevailed among the congregations of exiles in the four centuries following Jeremiah. In the great cities of the Hellenistic world, to which Jews migrated voluntarily by the tens of thousands after Alexander the Great, that understanding shaped Jewish relations with gentile cultures. And it was decisive in the definition of the Old Testament canon.

The ethic of that new covenant, I submit, is an ethic of peace. Resistance without violence, submission without acquiescence, sustained its strategy of hope. The deepest conviction of the diaspora communities, from Jeremiah's day to the nineteenth century, was that the moral power of the righteousness that the old covenant required and the new covenant promised would prevail at last over the power of marching armies, and bring shalom on earth.

I say all this in painful awareness that many deeply ethical Jews think that in our time the strategy of submission may have helped in some small way to make Auschwitz possible. They have on that account decided to resist and take vengeance upon any who would "kill Jewish children."

I say it also in honor of Dr. Rollo Meiersberg, who with his no-nonsense wife and babies lived in our house in

Charlottesville, Virginia, while he was a resident in psychiatry at the University of Virginia medical school in 1940 and 41. He taught me first what I suppose both he and I have often been troubled about since: that the only people in the world then practicing the ethics of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount--which I conceive to be the same as Jeremiah's ethic of exile--were the Jews of Nazi-occupied Europe. Neither he nor I could have then imagined the evil about to fall upon that people. The Holocaust, like the covenant at Sinai or what Christians believe happened at Calvary cannot be confined to some point in time, as defined by the Greek word chronos. Its evil is of such a magnitude that it seems to fill all of chronos and be an event of what the Greeks called kyros.

Not all Christians, I remind you, have been holders of power--not, certainly, those of the first century nor the brothers who followed St. Francis of Assisi; not the Mennonites of the Reformation Rhineland nor the Black Baptists of Mahalia Jackson's Chicago. The American evangelical community contains for larger proportions than many suppose of persons won from out-group families. Economically deprived white Americans were predominant in the charter membership of a score or more religious groups, from the Salvation Army to the Churches of Christ, the Adventists, and the Black Pentecostals, that are a part of the American evangelical mosaic. For such persons, as for the Jews in their twenty-five hundred years of exile from the land of Israel, faith and hope are the grounds of steadfast love; and that love appears to us to be the source of both

temporal and eternal shalom. My folks also said, blessed is the people whose God is the Lord; righteousness alone can exalt them, and only the reproach of sin should dismay them.

All of which brings me to the evil that I believe dominates the moral agenda for the eighties, and in which we who claim a biblical faith seem deeply involved, namely, the flowering of the ideology of violence. The moral affirmation by increasing numbers of Jews and evangelicals of making preparations to engage in nuclear warfare contradicts both their Bible and their history. For the threat of nuclear holocaust has become the evil that swallows up all others, making the solution of any social problem virtually impossible.

The endorsement by a seeming majority of voters in the last United States election of twin policies calling, first, for the maintenance of America's position of economic privilege and, second, for the nuclear superiority that some think is necessary to secure it, is ominous. The event exposes fully the mindless calculus of genocide, directed this time around at the whole human race, that now strangles every human hope. As in Nazi Germany forty years ago, educated, culturally refined, and pleasant men and women now seem determined to stand five missles against four to preserve peace on earth. The vast majority refuses to think about the likely result: not thirty but eighty million Soviet casualties some morning before breakfast, and an escalation from twenty-five to fifty million estimated American ones (making our side, as always, look best). Moreover, this moment of unimaginable human loss may not be triggered by either of these

two powers but by a smaller nation whose use of nuclear weapons for its own purposes could lead the United States or the Soviet Union to think itself under attack by the other. Among those millions of dead or wounded on both sides will be probably seventy-five per cent of the doctors and nurses, concentrated as they are in great popualtion centers. Perhaps thirty million children, not in any way blameable for their fate, will die in the gargantuan gas ovens that their own homes and play-yeards will become. There will be no heroic marching as at Buchenwald, away of those children, singing plaints of memory, fear, or hope. The wounded children and adults who survive, horribly burned, will be a life-long burden on the uninjured minority.

Could any moral argument justify the right of a person or group of persons on this earth to hold in readiness such destructive power? Is the survival of any nation, any people, worth this year's sharply escalating threat to all nations, all peoples?

Other issues that excite us just now may be moral opiates, deadening our awareness of the one that towers over all else of worth. A hundred Love Canals could not in a thousand years bear off the physical, psychic, and moral waste that would flow from one searing half-hour of nuclear war. Can you imagine that the capitalistic system of free enterprise would survive it? What happens to the environment for which we profess to care in such a holocaust? And what can I say for the dignity of womanhood, or for those unborn infants who, if

the advocates of a constitutional amendment against abortion succeed, will be born to live for such a death?

Yet, if I am hearing correctly, for the first time in nearly two thousand years persons who profess faith in the God of the Old and New Testaments are embracing the propsect of such hellish violence. They dignify it with the name "war" and justify it on the principle of group survival. Even the relatively undestructive wars of medieval knights prompted the church, in holy outrage, to lay rigid rules upon such conflicts (mostly among the elite classes) as it was unable to prevent. Since Hiroshima, however, American military policy has been grounded on our supposed right to use nuclear weapons to destroy masses of ordinary people. Amidst such a mania, Julia Ward Howe's words about truth marching on as the Almighty tramples out the vintage where grapes of wrath are stored become the thunder of Hell itself.

I am, please God, a human being first. I am a Christian, not simply by birth but by choice, because that faith, rooted as it was in the faith of Israel, promised to make human life true and righteous again. I ask you who are Jews to help save both Christians and Jews in America from the corruption of our historic commitment to the good of all mankind that presently flows from our besotted search for survival. Asking that, however, I will not hold back my equal debt to warn you against what is happening in the citadel of your corporate soul, the holy city, Jerusalem. Only six years ago, when it was possible to speak of such things freely, I ended a faculty seminar on

Israeli ethnic diversity at the Institute for the History of the Diaspora, Tel Aviv University, by sharing my thoughts on the shalom of Jerusalem. My wife, who was present, turned white. But my hosts listened as I spoke of the hundreds of years during which Jews, Moslems, and Christians of Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic and, later, Protestant persuasions had managed to keep relative peace in that sacred place.

Today, the world is Jerusalem. If peace is not kept everywhere it will probably not be kept anywhere. And the prophetic question is not what will the Almighty do, but what will we His people do in response to this moral challenge, and in the light of what He has already done.

Our own youngsters sense by their eighth birthday that they stand provisionally condemned to an Auschwitz that cannot be confined to a spot in East Germany, but will cover the whole world. They cry out in disbelief that we have brought them to life while endorsing the contingency of such a mass murder of our young, should it take that to preserve our affluence, power, and collective identity. Hear the cry of our own children in Israel and America, please, while you listen also to those who cry for peace and bread in Nicaragua and Bangladesh, in Chad and Laos.

No wonder Jeremiah and Ezekiel proclaimed that the new convenant had to be different from the old. They knew that shalom required more than the instruction of the sons by their fathers. It required the purifying of the minds of God's people by the presence of His Spirit, writing Torah in

their hearts. And so today, it requires the cleansing of our wills from the will to power, of our hearts from fear and hatred, and of our minds from the idiocy of calculating and acting only upon our own national or ethnic advantage.

The right-making grace of God is still the only way to peace. No wonder a Jewish messianist, John the Baptist, was not content merely to call his people to repentance and faith but promised them, as Joel and Ezekiel had, a baptism in the Spirit of Jahweh's purity, justice, and love. And no wonder Saul of Tarsus, writing from Corinth, summarized his letter about the good news to Jewish and Roman Christians with the words, "The kingdom of God is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit." The Spirit of Him whom we own as Lord of all our covenants can set us right, when every temptation is to the wrong. He promises to share with us divine holiness, breathing into our souls the life of God. And the peace that the Spirit of God brings, every Jewish child of St. Paul's day knew, was not defined by the Greek word signifying the absence of violence, but by the rich meaning of the Hebrew shalom: health, completeness, righteousness; the holiness of loyalty to Torah; and a human community in which the hungry find food and the universal aspiration for love, fulfillment.

Peace comes by the Spirit of the Lord. His presence in the darkness of our days promises the blossoming of the moral and physical desert Isaiah prophesied, if we will dare to believe it. The fulness of His joy can only flow from the right-making justice,

the renewing and hallowing love of the all-blessed creator who is our redeemer.

In a day when the whole human race has come to the crossroads called survival, ethical choices can only be made in the power of the Presence of the Lord. In His presence, the psalmist said, is fulness of joy, and at His right hand are pleasures forevermore. Holiness, virtue, justice, righteousness--they are all Torah: they all bespeak atoning grace.

MISSION, WITNESS AND PROSELYTIZATION

An Evangelical View

Dr. Dennis F. Kinlaw

First, a personal word to express my appreciation for being included in this conference. It is a privilege of rare proportion. As a southerner who grew up in a small town with one Jewess (beautiful and bright) in my class through the years of public school, my contact with Jews was limited. After college and seminary, Dr. Otto Piper, a refugee from Hilter's Germany and a New Testament professor at Princeton Theological Seminary, challenged me with the richness of Hebrew. That led to a shift in interest from philosophical to biblical studies. The better part of the next two years were spent under Princeton's semitists, Drs.Charles Fritsch and Henry Snyder Gehman. A severe case of mumps and the birth of our fourth and fifth children (twins) knocked me out of that program. It was six years before I was able to continue my formal studies at Brandeis University under Cyrus Herzl Gordon. A short term though at the University of Edinburgh where I read some Hebrew with Michael Portious and had Ugaritic and Babylonian brought on my horizon by Glasgow's C. J. Mullo-Weir, plus an hour a week through some difficult years in which I tried to help a Jewish social worker keep my Hebrew from expiring, kept the language of Israel at least alive. Two years, his tenth and eleventh, for our only son in Temple Israel in Albany, New York, in their Hebrew School helped. The impact of that continues in three grandchildren, Joshua, Abigail and Caleb. Then three years of classwork at Brandeis sealed my indebtedness to American Jewry. Five years of teaching Semitics in which some of the work of Yehezkel

and Martin Buber
Kaufman/became part of my intellectual capital deepened that indebtedness. After that an administrative assignment in a community almost devoid of Jews has made some former realities memories. An academic dean who is a graduate of Hebrew Union in Cincinnati, a divisional chairman and former student who completed his professional studies at Brandeis, two years of Hebrew in our undergraduate curriculum, membership in the Institute for Holy Land Studies, and numerous students and friends who have found American Jewish graduate programs and the nation of Israel vital parts of their development in appreciating their own heritage - all of these mean that I am not totally un-at-home with this group. Yet I find a strange apprehension at the prospect of speaking on a subject so sensitive and so personal. I come as a Christian for that is my personal commitment and my public profession. I find that the most transforming and determinative experience of my life came and continues to come through the impact of the Jew Jesus upon my life. I find myself like Thomas bowing to worship before Him. I think I know how offensive that is to your brothers if not to all of you. I have seen a Jewish friend, to my original shock, salivate with nausea at such a reference to Jesus as he involuntarily remembered burning Jewish flesh from Auschwitz. I know also that my understanding of my own faith and religious commitment owes as much today to Israel as it does to the Church. And so I come today as one indebted and one who would want to be offensive at no point except where honesty for him would demand it. And I come as one who is grateful in the assurance that you would not want me to come any other way.

Now to the subject (and ticklish one it is):"Mission, Witness and Proselytization."

Immediately there comes to mind a succession of memories that almost silences and stifles me. I remember the periods in Christian history when Jews have been subjected to the most inhumane efforts by Christians to effect a change of religious name and association for the most unworthy of motives. I also remember the exclusion or worse which Jews have suffered in the name of Jesus. Our guilt makes us defensive and a plea for forgiveness seems to carry infinite inadequacies. Let me remind you though that we have not always been easy on our own either. Servetus, as we all know, had his Calvin. And, I smile, though I am sure those of whom I speak did not, when I remember the arrival of the first two Quakers in Puritan Boston. Their literature was confiscated before they disembarked. And, when they descended the gangplank they did so in chains. They were a severe threat to Boston, those two Quaker ladies with their Quaker ideas. But ideas always seem to be dangerous. And if they really are not dangerous, they still can be extremely disconcerting.

At this point another memory comes to mind. It is the familiar characterization of this generation as a dwarf seated on the shoulders of a great giant. His position is enviable because he can see farther and better than any around him.

I enjoy using this figure with college freshman to remind them that they sit in a comparably favored position through no effort of their own. Their enviable position is due to a past that has vaulted them to their opportunity. I suggest that they need to be solicitous about the feelings of that giant for he could dump them. And then that position would be lost.

I would like to use that figure to speak to us today.

In this room we represent a position of privilege due to factors over which we have no control. We are heirs of a tradition - an ideology. We represent an intellectual elitism, a political freedom, an opportunity for service that makes us the envy of most of the world. We sit in our position on the shoulders of a giant. As I look down, I think I discern the feet of that giant and see them firmly rooted, not in the sands of time or an inexorable naturalistic evolutionary process, but in the pages of Hebrew Scriptures. The giant is not so much time. All others who live now have as much behind them as we do. The giant is made up of ideas. And that should not surprise us - for it is ideas that really count.

Some years ago I was reading some of the literature on the United Nations and its goals for the decade of the Sixties. It was called the Decade for Development. In the literature some of the aspirations for the world were spelled out. Slowly it began to dawn on me that those goals were largely realities already existent in some portions of the world. We could speak of the developed nations and the underdeveloped nations. The discussion centered on how to get the underdeveloped nations to developed status. But there was little discussion of how the developed nations achieved their status. It is my own conviction that it is due to the giant on whose shoulders we sit. It is also my conviction that if the underprivileged peoples of the earth are to share in any effective way in our privileges they must share in the ideas that made those privileges possible. There is an ideological climate that we enjoy that, I am convinced, is present only where the ideas first spelled out in the Tanakh have been espoused. And, I am convinced, there is little data to support the notion that these privileges can

permanently exist where that ideological climate does not exist. I speak of four things:

1. Modern science with all the technological and material advantages that it brings.
2. Freedom from superstition, from sorcery, witchcraft, and the occult.
3. An appreciation of the dignity and worth of the individual and his right to intellectual, religious, and personal freedom.
4. Hope, racial and personal, that the end of human existence is not extinction and meaninglessness.

Those of us in this room enjoy these benefits. The great mass of our brothers and sisters who with us inhabit this planet do not. Is it an accident of history? I think not.

The thesis of Robert Nisbet in his John Dewey Society Lecture of 1970, developed in his The Degradation of the Academic Dogma: The University in America 1945-1970, captures me. His conviction as a sociologist is that any social institution is the structural expression of a dogma or a set of dogmas. It matters not whether it is the church, the government, the Boy Scouts, or the university. His concern is the university. His conviction is that dogma is to an institution what oxygen is to an animal. The institution cannot live without the proper atmosphere. If the dogma dies, so does the institution. If the dogma changes, the institution follows suit. And, it is as true of the Institute for Advanced Studies at Princeton as it is for the Roman Catholic Church or the universities of which Nisbet speaks.

The problem of course with oxygen is that it is not visible to the naked eye. Therefore, the casual observer may think that the animal carries within himself his own resources for existence. Little does he realize the completeness of his dependence upon his ambience and the smallness of the temporal margin on which he exists.

Our freedoms and privileges are due to an ideological giant on whose shoulders we sit. The world seeks and we desire a similar position for it. But the giant whose stature we enjoy is largely invisible to a world that wants our privileges. There lies, or so it seems to me, our problem.

Let me take first the matter of our freedoms and the question of human rights. Whether it is the Jew intellectual in Russia, the rebel in El Salvador, the Cuban who longs to come to America, or the worker in Poland, the human demand for freedom is inextinguishable. Universally extolled, witness the United Nations charter, why is it so rare in human history? My own conviction is that the mix essential for its flowering is inclusive of religious and metaphysical elements that are offshoots wherever you find them of the Scriptures. The Declaration of Independence is an expression of these. Is there any chance that freedom and human dignity can really flourish without metaphysical sanctions? The widow, the orphan, and the franchiseless sojourner enjoyed such in ancient Israel and the guarantee lay not in the will of the people nor the benevolence of the state but in two Hebrew words: 'anî YHWH

It was that which brought Israel's greatest political ruler to heel before a Nathan. Was it not really that heritage that brought

Nixon, our chief executive, to heel before Law. When I saw him bow, I thought I heard coming from the joints of history, ʾanî YHWH. Is any human freedom safe in any other hands.

Or take the advantages of modern science: the technologies that have raised our standards of living and given us our material and temporal freedoms. We long to see these extended to include the hungry of Calcutta. There will never be enough Mother Theresas to meet the needs when millions live in a culture where the ideology gives sanctity to rats and preference to cows over children. I think the Michael Fosters, the Alfred North Whiteheads, and the A. T. van Leenwens are right when they tell us that at least one of the two crucial elements in the development of modern science roots in the Old Testament view of creation. Only where Moses is known or the dogmas he transmitted to us have been current, has the spell of a divine universe been broken as well as that ontocratic pattern of society in which there is an identification of the orders of society with the order of the cosmos. The spell of the divine universe had to be broken to make modern science possible, the ontocratic pattern of society to keep the advance of knowledge from being the instrument of the status quo for the advantages of the privileged few.

Now a word about superstition and the occult. Often we think of the West and particularly ourselves as the advanced and the discriminating. It is easy for us to forget our naivete. The reason of course is that we are dealing in the realm of the non-empirical. It has been our confidence that the presentation of secular science

would dispel the demons and spirits of the primitive world by its obvious rational impact. The fact is that our record on this is very poor. The occult is no longer limited to the primitives unless we want to redefine primitive. The power of the Testament which we call the Old Covenant and you call Bible to dispel such is miraculous. The presence of a literature like the Tanakh in which the demonic is almost absent and in which sorcery and witchcraft is forbidden, in a world as loaded with such as Israel's world is like a modern novel without a reference to an airplane, an automobile, a telephone, or a television. Such has never been written. It may be that those who believe that our superstitions and our fears are better dealt with where the God of Abraham and Moses is the backdrop than where modern science and belief in inevitable progress are the ambience.

As for hope, it is no accident to me that the two Old Testament words for it come from roots that mean "to wait." Nor is it an accident to me that the messianisms of history whether Christian, secular, or otherwise have usually been the result of movements that have been influenced by something or someone that had felt some Jewish influence. Even if they are secular and mechanistic their root is in a concept of waiting that was personal. Their faith may be in the secular and mechanistic but you can count on it that their hopes are personal. How right it seems to me and how much more comforting to think that the <u>what</u> on which we wait is a <u>Who</u>. That our confidence is in His sovereignty because we know from Tanakh that He is without rival or competitor. That He is full of compassion and tender mercies is proclaimed in Ezekiel 16. His

sovereignty over history is illustrated by the fact that those in covenant with Him gave to the world the concept of history itself.

I live on a college campus. I never cease to be excited by the buoyant hope that in general moves our youth. Those are special days when one of our young ladies meets me with a grin and flashes her ring finger. I always ask her when is the great day. I have yet to have one falter and say, "What great day?" The light in her eyes makes my day.

But I never experience that anymore without eschatological thoughts. The Bible that tells me that human history began with a wedding also tells me that the pattern for the most beautiful and joyous human experience is not human. It is the way the Living God choose to relate to His people. Ezekiel and Hosea put ontological overtones into my home. Will you pardon my Christian perspective when I tell you that it also puts eschatological connotations as well. No matter what the circumstances those who know the Living God have a gleam in their hearts if not in their faces. We see farther than many others and we like what we see.

Now you know my question. Will either of us be excused if we keep such to ourselves. I remember two lepers who in hopeless desperation exposed themselves to possible Syrian wrath and found more than they bargained for. Their words haunt me. "We do not well: this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace: if we tarry till the morning light, some mischief will come upon us: now therefore come, that we may go and tell the king's household." (II Kings 7:9)

My question to you as it is to my own brethren is, whether we can hold our peace. Suppose we are wrong? If our motive is love and our instrument is reason, can we make the human plight worse.

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George MARDEN

ON GOD AND EVIL

As you know, the topic of our session here tonight is the Holocaust, and I am supposed to provide a Christian perspective on that topic. Actually, much of what I will say here will not be specially and uniquely about the Holocaust. It will be somewhat more general than that, being as you might say, about the Holocaust and other terrible things. There might be some Christian insight which is, in some special way, about that awful tragedy which overtook the Jews of Europe in the 30's and 40's of this century, an insight which would exhibit and illuminate the specific meaning of that particular historical occurrence. There might, I say, be some such Christian insight. But if there is, I do not know what it is. So I cannot say anything about it.

I can say, however, that no Christian - or, at least, no Christian who is at all sensitive to the doctrinal underpinnings and world-view of his own religion - can be radically surprised by the Holocaust. Of course, he might be surprised in detail, and he might be profoundly saddened by what happened. But he cannot be radically surprised by it. For the orthodox Christian view of the human condition is shot through with dark elements. It is filled with notions such as those of sin and depravity, and of the corruption and deceitfulness of the human heart. Of course, it is also filled with elements of hope, of the redemption wrought by God Himself, of the possibility of forgiveness and a new life for the most degraded of sinners, of the new heart which God will give to men. Hope and darkness lie side by side in the Gospel. And the darkness is real. I was about to say that it is as real as the hope, but that would not be quite correct. For I think it is part of the Christian view that love is deeper than hate, that good is stronger than evil, that it is God and not Satan who is the original of all beings. If that is so, then hope reaches into a depth beyond despair, and connects with the bedrock of all

that is. But if the darkness of the world is not its deepest element, it is not shallow either. Sin and depravity are real, perhaps more real than many of us have yet really imagined. And perhaps we, or our children, will live to see things worse than the Holocaust.

A Christian who is at all reflective about his own faith can hardly miss the prominence of that dark element in its view of the world. After all, the most widely recognized symbol of Christianity is the cross, that ancient instrument of torture and execution. But Christians take the cross to be not only symbolic (though, of course, it is a symbol), but also to be historical. It is, they believe, a real event and a pivotal event in the act of redemption, the act in which God acknowledges and accepts and, in some way, undoes the evil of the world. And no Christian, I say, who remembers the cross can be radically surprised by a tragedy like the Holocaust.

But if a Christian cannot be radically surprised by the Holocaust, what does he, or what can he, say about it? Or if not about the Holocaust specifically, what can a Christian say in the face of the whole complex of suffering and sin, of tragedy and terror which overlies all human life? This question is, I suppose, one of the many versions of the celebrated problem of evil. The goodness of God on the one hand, and the evil of the world on the other - how can one hold them together in a single understanding, or even in a single act of faith? Or can one do so? It is to this topic that I devote most of my talk tonight.

Much, but not all, of what I say will consist of making some distinctions which will, I hope, be of help in our thinking. And the first of these is a distinction among various contexts in which one might try to speak of the significance of evil. There is, no doubt, a range of such contexts. I will mention two which lie near the extremes of that range. One of these contexts

is that of the ash heap, the other that of the lecture hall. And it may be that we should say much different things - not contradictory or incompatible things, but different things nevertheless - on the ash heap from those that we say in the lecture room.

Somethimes, that is, when we speak about evil we speak not only about suffering but also witin suffering, our own suffering and despair or that of our hearers . We speak, perhaps, between our sobs, or those who listen hear us between their sobs. That is the context of the ash heap. But it is totally unrealistic to construe our situation as if we were continuously immersed in an ocean of sorrow and suffering, overwhelmed by the tragedies of life. That is simply not so. For most of us, at any rate, there are times when we are not overwhelmed, when we can "distance" ourselves, so to speak, from our own pains, so as to consider them more or less dispassionately. And this is the context, whether it be a context of speaking or of hearing, which I call that of the lecture hall.

There is a sense in which the ash heap is more basic to the problem of evil than is the lecture hall. For our discourse about evil, regardless of the context in which it is delivered, must be about the ash heap. If there were no ash heap - one sort of ash heap or another - there would be no problem of evil to be discussed in the lecture hall. In that sense the ash heap is primary, and the lecture hall is derivative and secondary.

To recognize this primacy of the ash heap, however, requires us also to recognize the legitimacy of the lecture hall. We are not always on the ash heap, and we need not restrict our thinking about evil to those times when we are. We need not be drunk to think about wine, and we need not be in England to sing about London Bridge.

This distinction has an immediate application, of course, to our own situation. Some 30 to 40 years ago several millions of European Jews were

passing through the concentration camps and the death chambers. But we tonight are not in Belsen or in Ravensbruck. We are in Deerfield. We can no doubt remember, and to some extent feel, our own troubles. But hardly any of us came into this room tonight in tears. By and large, our own context here for these few days is that of the lecture hall. We will not improve our thinking by pretending otherwise. And so what we say and do here must be adapted to that context.

As I said earlier, I believe that substantially different sorts of speech and action may be appropriate to these different contexts. And it is unilluminating and unhelpful to criticize what is done in one context as if it were meant for the other. When someone attempts to comfort a parent beside a tiny grave, it is not useful to complain that he does not speak in numbered propositions like a Cambridge philosopher, that he does not draw every fine distinction, and the like. It is also unhelpful to complain about some rather analytic and dispassionate discussion of this topic, that it would not comfort the bereaved or that one cannot imagine giving that lecture in the shower rooms of Buchenwald. Perhaps, indeed, it would not comfort those who weep, or it would be out of place in the death chamber. But the analytic discussion may sometimes embody some important truth about evil, and one which it would be valuable to learn in an appropriate place. It might even involve a truth which will comfort us in some time of sorrow, even if we could not learn it in the middle of that sorrow.

A final observation about this distinction. One typically thinks about the lecture hall as a place where one either speaks or listens to a speech, and if one is doing neither then he may as well go home. Perhaps even in this case we overestimate the importance of talking, but I will not quarrel much with it here, since I am myself making a speech. But in the case of

the ash heap we are not even tempted to think that talking is the only important thing to do. My phrase, "the ash heap", is taken of course from the book of Job. In that ancient story we read that Job's friends, hearing of his troubles, came to see him. And when they saw him, we read, "they sat with him on the ground seven days and seven nights, and no one spoke a word to him, for they saw that his suffering was very great." That silent sympathy, sitting with Job among the ashes, may have been the best thing which his friends did for Job. And it may often be that the best thing we can do for someone who is suffering is to put an arm around their shoulders, to weep with them, or something of the sort. That does not mean that nothing can be said about evil. It means that not every time is the right time to say it.

Well, so much for the first distinction.

The second distinction concerns the initial orientation which the participants bring to any given discussion of this topic. In the sense in which I think of this orientation here, different participants in a single discussion may have different orientations. Such differences may generate serious obstacles to any useful progress, unless some of the participants can adjust, in some way, to orientations other than their own. But maybe what is involved here will become clearer with an example or two.

Some of you here are no doubt familiar with Elie Wiesel's striking play, The Trial of God. In that play, Berish and his demented daughter are presented as the only two survivors of a vicious pogrom in the town of Shamgorod. Some time later an itinerant band of Jewish actors arrives in Shamgorod, unaware of the tragedy which has occurred there. It is the time of the feast of Purim, when apparently it was the custom for the Jewish community to present public plays and farces. Berish insists that the traveling actors must put on a farce, and the farce they must play is that of

the trial of God. And in the end they do. Or at least they begin.

Now, it seems plausible to suppose that someone who is eager to prosecute the trial of God, someone who insists that this and nothing else will mark this feast of Purim, is not an unbiased or impartial inquirer into the relationship between God and evil. One would not ordinarily insist in this way on the trial of just anyone taken at random. It cannot be that God just had the bad luck to be picked for the trial in Shamgorod. No, Berish must already suspect - or, more likely, he must already believe - that God is guilty. When the trial of God begins, or when Wiesel's play opens, Berish has already an idea at hand. And if he puts his idea in the form of a question, something like "Why, God, did you allow this?", then his question has the force of an accusation.

Now, to say that Berish is not unbiased, or to say that he feels like accusing God, is not to criticize him. We do not have a general duty to be always undecided about everything, to be impartial in every proceding, never to make an accusation, or anything of the sort. Indeed, it may be that the main reason for having an open mind at some time and about some question is that this may enable us to cease someday from having an open mind about that question. It may enable us, that is, to close our minds upon some relevant truth. The fact that Berish already has an opinion about God cannot then, by itself, be taken as representing some defect in him. But it is a fact about him, a fact which bears upon what he is likely to say about God and evil. Even more important, it is a fact which bears on the question of what might be a useful thing for someone else to say to him about that topic.

But not everyone who thinks about God and evil need have Berish's orientation or state of mind. It is quite possible

to ask what seems superficially to be the same question, "Why, God, did You allow this?", from almost the opposite standpoint. It can be asked by someone who has no inclination at all to think that God is guilty, and who has no intention at all of putting forward an accusation. Such a person may have no doubt about the goodness and love of God, and he may be confident that God has some satisfactory reason for allowing the tragedy. But he asks in order to learn something, to know what that reason is.

Neither of these people, of course, is bound to receive an answer to his question. The person who arranges for the trial of God may find that God does not appear for that occasion. Maybe he will have to make do, as best he can, with some poor surrogate for the divine presence. Even Wiesel's traveling players find it surprisingly difficult to locate someone who will appear as God's attorney. And the person who does in the end play that role turns out to have a surprising qualification for it. But whoever it is who undertakes the defense of God, we may be forgiven if we suspect that God Himself might have conducted the defense in a different way. Perhaps, indeed, some day He will.

The person, too, who asks to learn may possibly go away unsatisfied. He may be unable to penetrate beyond generalities about "some good purpose," and the like, without finding any specific insight about the particular evil which occupies him. I have already said that I find myself in more or less of that position with repect to the Holocaust. Of course, the fact that I have no very illuminating and specific insight about this occurrence does not at all guarantee that no one does. Perhaps even here and tonight we may find some such

illumination. But, in general, there will be many evils for which we probably will not. And I know of no guarantee that this will be one of the exceptions.

Why is it that, perhaps, neither of these sorts of questioners receives the response for which he asks? Why does God not appear in person for the trial of God, making His own defense, instead of leaving it to theologians, philosophers, and people of similar ilk? Or why does He not reveal to the man or woman of faith the specific meaning of the evils which befall them and those whom they love? That, too, I do not know. We can, of course, speculate about possibilities. We can say--some, no doubt, will really be inclined to say---that God does not do these things because there is no God. And others, perhaps more picturesquely, may say that God does not answer the question of faith because He has no reason to put forth for the evils which He has allowed, and He does not come to His trial in person because He is ashamed to meet His accusers face to face. These are, however, not the only possibilities. In a difficult but provocative novel, a 20th century Christian writer, C.S.Lewis, suggests that God cannot now meet us face to face because we ourselves do not yet have faces. We are not yet persons enough, I suppose he means, to sustain our end of that conversation. For a father to undertake to speak "man to man," as we sometimes say, with his infant son would be at best a sort of joke. Someday, of course, father and son may speak in that way. But not yet. Something else must happen first, a different intercourse between the man and his son--not man to man talk, but baby talk and play and discipline and puzzlement and a hundred other things. And after that, perhaps, they will be able to meet as

man and man, face to face. And maybe something like that is true of ourselves and God.

Christianity, after all, does not represent God as being very much concerned Himself to deliver lectures about evil, or to write explanations of it. But neither does it represent Him as indifferent to it, or unconcerned about the fact that the world is trapped in a tangled net of pain and crime, of hatred and hurt. The Gospel is the good news of the redemption of the world from the grip of evil, or a redemption achieved by God Himself accepting the sin and the suffering of the world into Himself, to swallow it up and break its power, to make in the end all things new. But when we have gone through that process, when we look back at evil from a vantage point different from the one we have now, then perhaps we shall be able to ask different questions about it, better questions than those which we can now frame. And we shall be able to hear something which now we could not bear to hear.

I have been speaking about my second distinction, that of the orientation one brings to the discussion of evil. At one extreme there is the orientation of faith, of the person who thinks about evil against a background of confidence in the goodness and love of God. Near the other extreme is the orientation of doubt or accusation or disbelief, of the person who finds in evil a reason for rejecting the confidence of the believer. And of course there will be still other orientations scattered about this area. My own feeling is that all of these should be recognized as legitimate. The person of faith should recognize that some other people have real doubts, or even firm convictions in the opposite direction. And those people should also recognize, in their turn, that there are people without

those doubts. But in recognizing these other positions as genuine none of these parties needs to suggest that these positions are all equally true, or valid, or well-founded, or anything of the sort. That, it seems to me, is a kind of nonsense, and sort of nonsense which contributes nothing to the discussion.

There are people, for example, who say that the occurrence of evil in the world is incompatible with the existence of God as He is represented in the Christian faith. Since the evil is obvious they are inclined to infer that there is no God, or at least no such God as Christians worship. I think there are people who really do believe in that line of inference. I accept them as participants in the conversation about evil. But I also hold that they are mistaken in their premise, and hence in their inference as well. They, no doubt, believe that I am mistaken. Our conversation, if it is to proceed openly and honestly, must begin with a recognition of these opposed suspicions or convictions. How can it proceed? Perhaps I may close by indicating some of what I think may usefully be said in it from my own standpoint.

One useful thing, when faced with some argument or objection based upon evil, is to make that argument as clear and open as we can. Since it is the objector's argument, it would be best, of course, if he or she were the one to clarify it. But I suppose that the rest of us might help too. Many of you, for example, will be familiar with David Hume's famous discussion of religious topics in a book called Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion. In that book, written as a fictional conversation, there is a character named "Philo," who is often

taken to represent Hume's own views, more or less. Toward the end of the book Philo, discussing the significance of evil, says:

> Why is there any misery at all in the world? Not by chance surely. From some cause then. Is it from the intention of the Deity? But he is perfectly benevolent. Is it contrary to his intention? But he is almighty. Nothing can shake the solidity of this reasoning, so short, so clear, so decisive.....

Here, then, we have a piece of reasoning which Hume (or Philo) says is solid, short, clear, and decisive. But it is a curious argument. For one thing, its conclusion is unexpressed, though we may guess that it is supposed to conclude that there exists no such God as Christians claim. But even more curious is the fact that half of this alleged argument is expressed in questions. Let me read it again.

> Why is there any misery at all in the world? Not by chance surely. From some cause then. Is it from the intention of the Deity? But he is perfectly benevolent. Is it contrary to his intention? But he is almighty. Nothing can shake the solidity of this reasoning, so short, so clear, so decisive.....

every other sentence in that professed course of reasoning is a question. What is going on?

Rhetorically, the device is effective. That is, a person may well find himself puzzled by some of Philo's questions. He may not readily think of any satisfying answer to them. And he may then

slide into thinking that, since he cannot answer Philo's questions, Philo's argument must indeed be decisive as he claims. That, however, would be a mistake. Nothing of interest follows from the face--if it is a fact--that one or another of us does not know the answer to these questions. Of course, it might be thought that Philo himself has some answers in mind, plain statements or propositions representing Philo's beliefs, answers from which something of interest and importance might indeed follow. If so, fine. In my opinion, a person like Philo should be encouraged to put his argument in terms of those claims which he honestly believes to be true, blunt statements perhaps, but as clear and forthright as possible. Then maybe we can make some progress. Or, at least, we will have a chance.

As a matter of fact, it is not hard to produce a short, clear argument from evil. Consider the following, which uses a premise about our topic for this evening.

> If there were a God, and if He were good, then He would not permit an evil like the Holocaust to occur.
>
> The Holocaust did occur.
>
> Therefore, either there is no God or else He is not good.

That argument is short and clear. Since it uses a premise about the Holocause it might be thought to express the religious significance of that event. And it has the logical virtue of validity. It is also decisive? In my opinion, certainly not.

It may be useful to compare that argument with another.

There is a God who is perfectly good.
The Holocaust occurred.
Therefore, it is not true that, if there were a good God, He would not have allowed the Holocaust.

These two arguments are closely related. They share the premise about the reality of the Holocaust. Each argument has, in addition, a premise which is the denial of the other argument's conclusion. And so, of course, each conclusion is the denial of the other argument's first premise. In these ways the two arguments are, we might say, symmetrical.

Because they are symmetrical in this way, these two arguments also share their logic. If one of them is valid, then so also is the other. Since the first is valid, the second is also valid. And that means that we cannot choose between them on the ground of their logic alone.

It would seem, however, rather awkward to accept both of these arguments. For then we should have to accept two pairs of explicitly contradictory propositions. Though these arguments are symmetrical in several ways they have an important asymmetry. One of them may be sound, but they cannot both be sound. That is, they cannot both have a full set of true premises. It is, of course, obvious that the premise which they share is true. The Holocaust did happen. But the two first premises--these cannot both be true. And therefore the two conclusions cannot both be true.

It looks, therefore, as though we are faced with a choice. Or perhaps it is not so much a choice as a distinction between

two cognitive states in which we might find ourselves. At any rate, we might believe that God would not have allowed the Holocaust, or we might believe that there is a good God. But it would be awkward, to say the least, to believe both. How can we decide between them?

Presumably, a person who puts forward the first of these arguments does believe that God, if He existed and were good, would not have allowed the Holocaust. Perhaps some of us here are inclined to believe it. But why is that proposition to be believed? Is there some good reason to suppose that it is true? Or is it that people believe the first premise of that first argument without any good reason, either by a mistake or just without reason at all?

I myself believe that God could have prevented the Holocaust, had He chosen to do so. But I do not think that it is true that He would have prevented the Holocaust if He were good. Nor can I think of any good reason to suppose that this is true. And a person who does think that it is true might usefully be challenged to try to think of such a rdason himself. His attempt to do that might itself generate an advance in understanding.

The claim that God, if He were good, would have prevented the Holocaust cannot, for example, be defended successfully as a derivation from the more general principle that:

> Any person, insofar as he is good, will prevent every evil which he can prevent.

That principle would indded yield the corresponding claim

about God. Unfortunately, this principle is itself false. We can test it out in many non-theological cases. There are plenty of evils which I could prevent, plenty which you could prevent, and so on. Now, no doubt some of these evils continue because you and I are not perfectly good. If we were better people than in fact we are, then we would prevent or avoid some of those evils. But not all of them. Some of the evils which we allow do not reflect adversely on our morality. We allow them to continue not because of our badness or our lack of power to prevent them, but in spite of our goodness and our power.

Garrett Hardin, a biologist, says somewhere, if I remember correctly, that we can never do just one thing. Though he makes this observation in a somewhat different connection, it is crucial to the point we are here considering. To prevent a given evil would be, considered in abstraction from everything else, a good thing. Considered, that is, as "just one thing" it is the sort of thing which a good person would do if he could. But often, though we can do that thing we cannot do just that one thing. We can prevent that evil only if we also do something else. And that something else may be a cost, a sort of moral cost. That other thing may itself be an evil, or the loss of some great good. And so it may happen that, though we can indeed prevent a certain evil, we can do so only at the cost of making the world worse than it would have been. In such a situation a good person would, I suppose, allow the continuance of some evils which he could prevent.

Considered abstractly, for example, suffering would seem to be an evil, and its prevention would be a good. It may soon be within the power of some single human being, if it is not already, to put an end to all the suffering in the earth simply by destroying the habitability of the earth itself in a series of nuclear blasts. But it is far from clear that the doing of that act, though undoubtedly it would eliminate some evils, would be a good thing.

It is of course true that God, if He is omnipotent as many theologians have thought, can do some things without resort to the means which we find necessary. During World War II, I understand, there was a proposal that the gas chambers in some of the concentration camps should be bombed from the air. But God could, I suppose, have made them inoperative without resort to bombing. And so on through many possible examples. It does not follow from this, however, that God could have done just that one thing. For some things are linked to one another not merely contingently but logically. And those things cannot be separated, not even by God Himself, not even by omnipotence.

For example, God could, I have no doubt, have prevented Hitler from acting. And He could have left Hitler free to act. But He could not both have prevented Hitler from acting and also left him free to act. Neither God nor anyone else could do that. And so it is possible that even God is sometimes faced with a situation in which there is an evil which He could eliminate--an evil whose elimination, abstractly considered, would be a good thing--but which is such that it would not be a good thing for Him to eliminate it. In such a situation the fact that the evil is not eliminated need not reflect adversely

about God. Unfortunately, this principle is itself false. We can test it out in many non-theological cases. There are plenty of evils which I could prevent, plenty which you could prevent, and so on. Now, no doubt some of these evils continue because you and I are not perfectly good. If we were better people than in fact we are, then we would prevent or avoid some of those evils. But not all of them. Some of the evils which we allow do not reflect adversely on our morality. We allow them to continue not because of our badness or our lack of power to prevent them, but in spite of our goodness and our power.

Garrett Hardin, a biologist, says somewhere, if I remember correctly, that we can never do just one thing. Though he makes this observation in a somewhat different connection, it is crucial to the point we are here considering. To prevent a given evil would be, considered in abstraction from everything else, a good thing. Considered, that is, as "just one thing" it is the sort of thing which a good person would do if he could. But often, though we can do that thing we cannot do just that one thing. We can prevent that evil only if we also do something else. And that something else may be a cost, a sort of moral cost. That other thing may itself be an evil, or the loss of some great good. And so it may happen that, though we can indeed prevent a certain evil, we can do so only at the cost of making the world worse than it would have been. In such a situation a good person would, I suppose, allow the continuance of some evils which he could prevent.

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upon God's power, or His goodness, or His reality.

Was the Holocaust a case of this sort? Without a doubt, the Holocaust was something which God could not have prevented as an isolated entity, leaving everything else as it was. If the Holocaust had not happened, then the moral significance of a multitude of lives would have had to be in some way different. The prevention of the Holocaust would have had a cost, even if it had been done by omnipotence. It could not have been done as just one thing.

That does not, of course, show by itself that God should not have prevented it. We should often do things even if they cost something, and so, I suppose, should any moral agent. I can readily imagine someone who thinks that the Holocaust was an immense and terrible evil, and who thinks that the good associated with it, whether of free-will or otherwise, was insufficient to outweigh it. Consequently, he thinks, God should have prevented the Holocaust, and He would have done so if He existed and were good. And so he accepts the main premise of the first argument.

I readily imagine, I say, such a person. But I find in myself no confidence in such a view. It seems to me quite possible that, in such a case, some of the values involved are as yet totally unknown to us, and others are such that we have no ready and reliable way of quantifying them for comparison with each other. And so I am, it seems to me, in no position to base anything upon a claim about what God would have done, or should have done about the Holocaust.

I might, of course, feel a little bad about that. I might wish that I were closer to omniscience. I might wish that I had more knowledge of, and more insight into, the cosmic range of values, and that I had at hand a ready calculus for handling them. But the fact is that I do not, and there is no benefit in building our intellectual lives on the pretence that we are something which in fact we are not.

That is why I take the short clear argument from evil not to be decisive. But of course that argument, or some replacement for it, really belongs to someone on more or less the other side of the fence. Perhaps he will think of another way of putting it, or of another line of support. If that is his inclination, then I for one would encourage him to do so. If he can do that in some illuminating way, then perhaps both of us will be able to see better where we are, and what is the full meaning of both the light and the darkness which, as I said earlier, lie side by side in the Gospel.

There is, too, that other short clear argument which I mentioned, the one which is in many ways, but not all, symmetrical with the first. Its first premise, you remember, is that God exists and He is good. That argument, or something like it figures in the thinking of many believers. They believe that God is somehow justified in allowing the tragedy of the world to continue. But they do not believe it because they somehow see clearly into that justification. No, they believe it because they believe that God is good and loving altogether. Sometime it must be the turn of the critic to ask the believer just what that means and why he believes it. That, too, will be a useful question. It belongs, however, to the beginning of another paper, and not to the end of this one.

Mission, Witness and Proselytization: A Jewish View

by Rabbi Sanford Seltzer

In an era characterized by efforts at interconfessional rapproachement and the development of transdenominational movements within Christianity, the role of Judaism and the Jewish people in the unfolding of the divine plan remains unresolved. Israel continues to be a theological problem and the future of ecumenism is clouded by the growing division between Evangelicalinterpretations of mission and witness and those Protestants and Catholics committed to a theology of mutual recognition between Judaism and Christianity.[1]

J. Coert Rylaarsdam laments the "disease in Christian mission to Jews" and holds out the promise of Jews and Christians as "brothers in hope, members of separated communities of faith but servants of the same God in a single ongoing drama of re-redemption."[2] Krister Stendahl understands Paul's reference to God's mysterious plan for Israel in Romans 11 as "an affirmation of God-willed coexistence between Judaism and Christianity in which the missionary urge to convert Israel is held in check."[3]

Eva Fleishner emphasizes that not only has the Catholic Church officially repudiated any and all forms of proselytizing of Jews but as a consequence "Christianity's mission to the Jews is reversed or transformed into the effort to live in greater fidelity to the faith it has received from Judaism in the specific way of the Jew called Jesus whom Christians acclaim as Christ."[4]

Conservative evangelicals speak out with equal fervor and conviction. Arthur Glasser writes: "We feel it incumbent upon Christians to reinstate the work of Jewish evangelism in their missionary obediance."[5] Gerald Anderson adds: "Christians have much to regret and repent for in the history of their relations with the Jewish people, but while there is no special mission to the Jews, neither is there any special exemption of the Jews from the universal Christian mission."[6] He reminds his readers that Reinhold Niebuhr's near successful quest to put an end to Christian efforts to evangelize Jews "were motivated more by sociological than theological considerations."[7]

Two citations from the proceedings of the first Evangelical-Jewish conference sponsored under these auspices also merit mention in this context. Marvin Wilson presents a concise definition of evangelical as "a Christian who believes, lives and desires to share the Gospel."[8] Carl Edward Armerding, in

an essay entitled, "The Meaning of Israel In Evangelical Thought," writes: "I would like to think that Evangelical Christianity admittedly and unabashedly committed to Jesus Christ and the scriptural message is the kind of concerned, loving, caring and thinking community to which, like the house of Mary, Martha and Lazarus, our Jewish friends would seek to repair."[9]

Against this backdrop of increasing Christian disagreement over the meaning and future of Jewish existence, the various branches of contemporary Judaism, whatever their differences, and these are not insubstantial, have been united, or so it appeared by their distress over the resurgence of Christian missions to the Jews, however subtle or well intentioned these overtures were. They joined as well in their emphatic rejection of Judaism as a proselytizing faith stressing instead the rabbinic injunction that the righteous of all peoples have a share in the world to come. "It is as arrogant," wrote the late Abraham Joshua Heschel, "to maintain that the Jewish refusal to accept Jesus as the Messiah is due to their stubborness or blindness as it would be presumptuous for the Jews not to acknowledge his glory and holiness in the lives of countless Christians."[10]

That Jews had once actively missionized and that Judaism had left an indelible impact upon the ancient world were undeniable. George Foot Moore's observation: "The conviction that Judaism as the one true religion was destined to become the universal religion

was a singularity of the Jews"[11] is consistent with the accounts of Jewish missionary successes rendered by Josephus, Greek and Roman historians, rabbinic sources and, of course, in Matthew 23:15.

But this was part of the dead and buried past, a segment of the record of the historic Jewish experience reserved for the researcher and scholarly discussion. Scholars might differ as to the precise chronology and circumstances governing the cessation of Jewish missionizing endeavors, but that and that alone was the extent of the debate. To be sure, Judaism was open to men and women who voluntarily opted to become Jews and the tradition was quite clear that the ger Tzedek, the proselyte, was as beloved of God as the born Jew and perhaps even more.[12] But no proselyte was to be accepted without the proper orientation and prior and ample warning regarding the frequent plight of the Jewish people. The rabbis were unequivocally disapproving of conversions performed solely for the sake of matrimony as well.

The same commonality of theme was generally evident in Jewish thought in dealing with the scope and thrust of Deutero-Isaiah. Israel's mission was to teach God's word by example. She was to so conduct herself among the nations in which she dwelt, that

through her dedication to Torah the world would be inspired and humanity perfected under the kingdom of the Almighty. That the duties and responsibilities of a holy people might result in pain and suffering and even tragedy as they often did were unavoidable burdens of that legacy. "The Jews," writes Slonimsky, "become protagonists in the most august drama, the making of man. They are the people whose actual course of life furnishes the material for the apotheosis in Isaiah 53 and the image there conceived is so supreme that it was borrowed and used to invest the central figure of the Christian religion."[13]

There were those, particularly among the founders of Reform Judaism, who saw the divine vocation of the Jew in the more literal context of Isaiah 49:6. Isaac Mayer Wise wrote that "the mission of Israel was and still is to promulgate the sacred truth to all nations on earth."[14] He claimed to discern among "advanced Gentiles" a gradual approach to the content of what he termed Israelism."[15] For Kaufman Kohler, "the idea of Israel's mission formed the very soul and life force of the Jewish people in its history and literature."[16]

Others swept up in the fervor of an imminent messianism preached a univeralism achievable only "when the Jew shall have completely cast away his obstructive exclusiveness and ceremonialism and the Christian his Christology."[17] In 1910,

Isadore Singer pleaded with world Jewry to reclaim the New Testament as an integral part of historic Judaism and to remove the blank page between Malachi and Matthew. "Has modern Judaism," he asked, "after an interval of 1,839 years, the will and the force to resume the great monethestic world propaganda which our ancestors limited by national passions abandoned shortly before their war with Rome?"[18]

In the opening years of this century, countless Reform rabbis preached and taught the Jewishness of Jesus and called for his reclamation as a Jew and his return to a rightful place in the synagogue where he was nurtured and in the gallery of immortal leaders of the Jewish people. On Sunday morning, December 20, 1925, Stephen Wise preached perhaps the most controversial sermon of his distinguished career, The Jewish Attitude Toward Jesus of Nazareth. "Shall we not say that this Jew is soul of our soul and the soul of his teaching is Jewish and nothing but Jewish."[19]

But the pronouncements of Wise and Kohler and the others fell upon deaf and often hostile ears. The occasional voice lifted in behalf of the resumption of mission was greeted by a formidable silence. Jewish energies were directed toward the cessation of the Christian evangelical enterprise. It was only in the Reform prayer book that the idea persisted and even here in liturgical themes so intentionally phrased as to transform them into vague, innocuous and poetic ideals. Thus, in the waning moments of the Day of Atonement the congregation reads the following: "Grant

that the children of Israel may recognize the goal of their changeful career so that they may exemplify by their zeal and love for mankind the truth of Israel's message, one humanity on earth even as there is but one God in heaven."[20] A similar sentiment is found in the ritual for Sabbath Eve. "Almighty and merciful God thou has called Israel to thy service and found him worthy to bear witness unto thy truth unto the peoples of the earth. Give us grace to fulfill this mission with zeal tempered by wisdom and guided by regard for other men's faith."[21]

As of December 1978, it was no longer possible to speak quite as definitively of a Jewish view of mission, witness and proselytization. "Jewish views" was now a more legitimate description. It was then that Rabbi Alexander Schindler, president of the parent body of Reform Judaism, The Union of American Hebrew Congregations, called upon its Board of Trustees to authorize the creation of a Task Force On Reform Jewish Outreach among whose goals was to be the launching of "a carefully conceived program aimed at all Americans who are unchurched and who are seeking roots in religion."[22] Schindler was explicit in his insistence that his message was not intended to paint Judaism as the one and only true faith or to impugn the allegiances of those who had selected other equally exalted paths to God. But he was equally candid when he said: "let me not obfuscate my intent through the use of cosmetic language. Unabashedly and urgently I call on our members to resume their time honored vocation and to become champions for Judaism....these words imply not just passive acceptance but

affirmative action."[23]

The Board of Trustees of the Union approved the establishment of the Task Force which is currently at work, its structure slightly modified by its emergence as a joint venture of both the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, essentially a congregational body, and the Central Conference of American Rabbis, the rabbinic arm of Reform Judaism. It abides by the conditions of its mandate which are to undertake a thorough and comprehensive study of Rabbi Schindler's recommendations so as to ascertain their validity and their implementability That report is to be delivered to the next Biennial convention of the Union in Boston, Massachusetts, in December, 1981. Until that time, outreach to the religiously unchurched remains a matter for investigation and not for action.

Yet that caveat in no wise diminishes the significance of the Schindler proposal for the future of Christian-Jewish relationships. His promise that whatever programs may ultimately be instituted will not be directed toward practicing Christians or members of any other faith community does not lessen its impact any more than the reassurance that whatever is done will be done with dignity and forebearance. The perspectives from which both evangelicals and non-evangelicals confront the Jewish people have been altered. A new dimension has been introduced into the dialoque.

Jews also have been challenged. The assumptions underlying post Holocaust Jewish survival have been tested. The call to mission

requires that Jews focus once more upon that dichotemy of role which has always been so taxing for Jews and which Arthur Cohen characterized as the tension between the natural and the super-natural Jew. "Christianity shares with us the mystery of our presence. Though it compromises its own history when it destroys us, it treasures the mystery of our presence and marvels at the constancy of our disbelief. This is only to say that the non Jew conserves the dogma of our supernatural vocation while we, its legatees and bearers, would sacrifice dogma for fact, vocation for our natural condition."[24]

Cohen's formulation of the problem nearly 20 years ago struck a discordant note in a Jewish community convinced that after Auschwitz only a demythologized Jew could ever survive. His bitterest critic, Richard Rubenstein, summarized what many others undoubtedly felt: "Why must he complain that Jews want primarily to be normal or even just a bit vulgar and bourgeois? Why does he agonize over the fact that Jews have wisely elected to reject saintliness as a profession?"[25] A generation later the issue again has surfaced.

Shortly after the creation of the Task Force On Reform Jewish Outreach, Rabbi Balfour Brickner, then Director of the UAHC Commission On Interreligious Affairs, wrote to a select number of Catholic and Protestant leaders eliciting their comments. Thirty-one persons were contacted. Eighteen replied. The

responses were generally favorable viewing the renewed possibility of Jewish mission as a demonstration of the vitality of Judaism and the Jewish people. "Whether the engagement with the outsider actually leads to conversion or changes of religious affiliation is not important," said Peter Berger, "rather what is essential is that very committed individuals and every community of such individuals engage with all the significant alternatives."[26]

The respondents praised Schindler for not implying that Judaism was superior to other faiths and indicated that the move would not damage interfaith relationships. On the contrary, it was felt that the level of the discussion would be enhanced now that issues heretofore ignored or avoided had been opened. Krister Stendahl wondered whether it was possible to distinguish between outreach to the unchurched and non-proselytizing. He asked: "If your mission is non-proselytizing is there also a way in which a Christian mission to Jews can be seen as non-proselytizing?"[27] Harvey Cox and Eugene Fisher in a similar vein saw the proposal raising more questions that it answered in dealing with who truly was a Jew. "I am opposed to Christians trying to convert Jews," said Cox. "I do not extend my opposition to the case of secular Jews for whom Judaism has ceased to have any personal meaning..."[28]

"What does non-religious mean," asked Eugene Fisher, "in the context of a tradition which does not make the same distinction in the same way between saved and secular, religious and profane, as

that which prevails in Christianity and which even in Christianity is a matter of considerable internal debate?"[29] Fisher desired more clarification as to whether the definition of the unchurched included the millions of lapsed Catholics in the world. "Does not," he added, "the church have a prior claim to work among this group?"[30]

Whatever their reservations, these essentially positive statements of non-evangelical Christians were consistent with a commitment to the theological parity of two faith communities joined in the struggle against secularism. Thus in a letter to Rabbi Schindler, Leonard Swidler congratulated him on the reclamation of Judaism's atrophied universalistic strain. "I am sure," he wrote, "this will improve ecumenical relations between Jews and Christians for it will tend to foster a sense of parity rather than Christian paternalism. In the atmosphere of the former, one can have dialogue, but not in the latter. Mazel tov."[31]

The ambiguity of terms , such as religiously unchurched or even - its subsequent modification to religiously non - preferenced requires a far more scrupulous examination than had been initially contemplated. A 1978 study by the Princeton Religious Research Center and the Gallup Organization entitled, The Unchurched American, revealed rather conclusively that it was erroneous to equate lack of religious belief with the absence of formal church or synagogue affiliation. That study defined unchurched as a person who was neither a member of a church or synagogue and who had not

attended either institution in the past six months apart from weddings, funerals or special events such as Christmas, Easter or Yom Kippur.[32] The survey disclosed that eight out of ten persons polled stated that one could be a good Christian or a good Jew without participating in formal services of worship. Sixty-eight percent of the unchurched Christians believed in the resurrection of Jesus and 64% that Jesus was either God or the son of God. Fifty-seven percent affirmed a belief in the hereafter and 70% said that prayer was efficacious.[33]

When asked to account for the apparent inconsistency between professions of religious commitment and the absence of formal institutional membership those interviewed answered that the church had lost its spiritual emphasis and was so preoccupied with institutional politics that it was ineffective in helping people find their way in the world.

The confusion over exactly who are the unchurched is even more pronounced in defining the so-called secular Jew, a concept Dr. Fisher recognizes as beyond the Jewish vocabulary and which Eugene Borowitz, writing as a Jew, describes as the "secularization of Jewish spirituality." It is here that the Christian-Jewish argument may encounter yet another of its numerous impasses. Jews have never made the distinction between religious and non-religious as precisely as Christians nor have they compartmentalized

the meaning of Jewish peoplehood.

It is true that the tripartite division of American society into neat categories of Protestant, Catholic and Jew has contributed to the present state of affairs. It is only in recent years that Christian and Jewish thinkers have given serious concern to the shallowness of American religiousity most aptly called by Will Herberg a "religiousness without religion, a religiousness with almost any kind of content or none, a way of sociability or belonging rather than a way of reorienting life to God."[35]

It may not be possible for Christians to accept the criteria of Jewishness, as stipulated by Jews, if these run counter to a Christian understanding of Judaism and of the prerogatives of Christian mission. Jews in turn must be prepared to acknowledge this situation and in an open society endure the possibility of Christian outreach to so-called secular Jews.

It is somewhat paradoxical that although non-evangelicals have generally decried the activities of Jews For Jesus and other Hebrew Christian missionary movements, their suppositions that secular Jews are acceptable candidates for conversion are consistent with the attitudes of evangelicals who have long seen no contradiction between one's ethnic identity as a Jew and one's witness to Christ. Gerald Anderson observes: "In our own time there is evidence that many Jews who have accepted Jesus as the Messiah take a new pride in their Jewishness."[36] Richard R. deRidder adds: "The denial that one can be both a Jew and a

Christian is simply not true. Christianity in its gospel of the Christ of universal grace does not doubt that God still moves into Jewish lives by the pathway of faith while waiting patiently.. ..for Jewish recognition of Jesus."[37]

The semantic and substantive difficulties inherent in defining the unchurched and the non-preferenced in ways congenial to both Jews and Christians awaits the serious attention of both faith communities and is already the subject of evaluation by the Task Force On Reform Jewish Outreach. While non-evangelicals have gone on record as approving of some form of Jewish mission, the evangelical view has not as yet been documented. Four representatives of the evangelical community were among the recipients of Rabbi Brickner's questionnaire. None responded, a circumstance which, while hardly conclusive, may well be a significant barometer of evangelical disapproval and perhaps dismay. In March 1977, an editorial in Christianity Today, noting the unwillingness of Jews to recognize Jesus as the messiah went on to say that it would be inconceivable for evangelicals not to share the good news with Jews as with all others. That statement came as no surprise. What was unexpected was the subsequent paragraph of the editorial. "If evangelical relations are to prosper we must then acknowledge the right of each group to make voluntary converts from among the followers of the other."[38]

To be sure, the article was written nearly two years before the Schindler proposal, but if it be truly reflective of the evangelical position, its seeming internal contradiction not withstanding, it would reduce the degree of Jewish apprehension. But if the editorial

was not representative of evangelical thought and if mainstream evangelicals echo the sentiments of Carl Henry, "the basic issue between Christian and Jew remains is Jesus of Nazareth the messiah of promise"[39] then the call for active Jewish outreach is of a totally different theological complexion.

It is one thing for evangelicals to suffer the recalcitrance of a stiff necked people. It may be another for them to concede that it is both possible and permissible for salvation to be of and by the Jews. It is one thing to explain the continued existence of Judaism and the Jewish people as a divine mystery accompanying Christ's church on its way through the world "as a mirror and guarantor of God's love which transcends our yes or no."[40] It is another to acknowledge the truth of Israel's message and the permanence of its mission.

The call for Jewish outreach was not greeted enthusiastically by other brances of Judaism, nor was there any unanimity within the ranks of Reform. Many saw it as an unfortunate, regressive decision which could only endanger the hard won gains achieved in Jewish-Christian relationships and result in the further alienation of evangelicals. Rabbi David Polish, a distinguished past President of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, expressed the feeling of many opponents when he wrote that "there could be no more inopportune time than now to jeapordize a truce that could perhaps become a peace. Some would seize the occasion as a pretext for lifting a reluctant suspension of their mission, perhaps blaming Jews for rejecting a profound Christian concession."[41]

Polish's fears are not to be dismissed idly. The memories of generations of Jews who when offered the cross or martyrdom chose to die with the Shema Yisroel upon their lips is never far from the surface of the collective Jewish psyche and do not fade regardless of time and place. It may well be impossible for evangelicals to comprehend the depth and intensity of these feelings for Jews. There is no clearer illustration of the enormity of that barrier than the following excerpt taken from an article entitled, The Conversion Of the Jews, by William Sanford Lasor, a professor of Old Testament at Fuller Theological Seminary. "Until we know the Jew and love him as a person, until we share something of his memory of the Holocaust, until we sincerely believe that we are in his debt....it seems to me that talk about evangelizing the Jew is only empty rhetoric....What have you and I done today to help some Jew trust us?"[42]

Many Jews literally held their breath in anticipation of the evangelical rejoinder to the call for Jewish mission. Those anxieties predicated upon bitter experience were so overwhelming that much of what Schindler said was either ignored or not even heard. The nature of what would be done, the methods that would be used, the persons who would be reached were all irrelevencies, swept asunder in the groundswell of a visceral, almost instinctive, no! Jewish fears of evangelical retaliation ingrained as they are by the painful lesson of the centuries and then restated in the death camps of Europe make the success of a reasoned and rational reply doubtful if not impossible.

But if the experience and precedents of the past, let alone to the present, are of any value, the tenacity of the Jew to his faith and to his people is well known. No more significant index of the perseverance of Jewish identity exists than in the data showing that despite the growing incidence of exogamous marriages involving Jews, less than one percent of Jewish partners convert to Christianity while between 30% and 40% of non-Jewish partners become Jews. Increasingly, mixed married couples affiliate with synagogues and determine to raise their children as Jews even as the non-Jewish partner has resolved to retain his or her religious identity.[43] These continuing trends would confirm Milton Himmelfarb's opinion that "if anything, the intermarriage of Jews seems less ideological today, less rebellious than it did in the 1920's."[44]

Nor is it inappropriate to quote from the comments of a Queens College sociology professor, Thomas Robbins: "Any faith or religious tradition that can only survive through....the requirement that other faiths renounce proselytization would appear to be desperately feeble."[45] The one provise to be added is that the validity of such reasoning depends upon the safeguards of a democratic society in which coercion and oppression for the harboring and expression of ideas contrary to the will of the majority are expressley forbidden and where people are not labeled moral or immoral solely on the basis of highly subjective interpretations of religious texts."

There were others in the Jewish community whose opposition to a program of outreach to non-Jews rested on the equally sincere belief that however worthy the project it would detract from the more important task of putting our own religious house in order. Contemporary Jewry, they argued, had first to bear witness to itself as engaged in a sacred task before extolling the virtues of Judaism to strangers. They were correct in their recognition of the need. But what they failed to perceive was that the very possibility of mission and its restatement as an ideal compelled the Jew to do precisely that.

The rebirth of the State of Israel was of profound theological significance for Christians whose failure to come to terms with the reality of Jews as flesh and blood remains a stumbling block to interfaith understanding. For Jews, the physical fact of Israel as a refuge for the survivors of the Holocaust and its concrete testimony that at long last they were a people like every other people, no longer rootless and disembodied was of greater moment.

The fulfillment of the ancient promise stirred the Jewish spirit and revived the Jewish soul. It underlined the commentary of Hannah Arendt "because only savages have nothing more to fall back upon than the minimum fact of their human origin, people cling to their nationality all the more desperately when they have lost the rights and protection that such nationality once gave them. Only the past with its entailed inheritance seems

to attest to the fact they still belong to the civilized world."[4]

But this jubilation over the land of Israel was also a vivid reminder of how traumatic the sojourn of the people of Israel had been among the nations of the earth and of how far the inner journey yet to be traversed by the Jew in the restoration of the authentic Jewish self. The rehabilitation was as yet incomplete. The paradox of Jewish survival resides not in the manifest reality of the Jewish people despite the vicissitudes of history but in the deeper struggle to unhesitatingly embrace inwardly that which is proclaimed to Judaism's friends and foes. God's covenant with Israel is permanent and binding. Judaism lives neither to be superseded nor rejected as the word of God.

The capacity of Jews to speak of mission is of far greater importance than its actualization. To couch one's destiny again in religious language is to at long last be redeemed from the externally imposed image of an accursed and deicidal people. To dare raise the possibility is to witness the restitution of Jewish self-esteem and to suggest a renewed yearning in Jewish life for the recovery of the transcendent. Above all, one experiences a sense of the holy as Jews again struggle with the dilemma posed by the vision of consecration in Isaiah 6: "And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, whom shall I send and who will go for me? Then I said, here I am, send me."

NOTES

1. See Harold H. Ditmanson, Some Theological Perspectives, Christian Mission and Jewish Witness, FACE TO FACE, Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, New York, Fall-Winter, 1977. p.6.

2. J. Coert Rylaarsdam, Mission To Christians, Ibid., p.18.

3. Krister Stendahl, Limits of Christian Mission, Ibid., p.19.

4. Eva Fleishner, In the Light of the Holocaust and Religious Pluralism, Ibid., p.16.

5. Arthur Glasser, Christian Missionaries and A Jewish Response, WORLDVIEW, volume 21, number 5, May 1978. p.40.

6. Gerald Anderson, Christians Challenge the Rabbi's Response WORLDVIEW, volume 21, numbers 7-8, July/August 1978.

7. Ibid.

8. Marvin Wilson, Evangelical Christians and Jews Share Perspective, Evangelicals and Jews In Conversation, edited by Tanenbaum, Wilson and Rudin, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Mich., 1978. p.4.

9. Carl Edwin Armerding, The Meaning of Israel In Evangelical Thought, Ibid., p.138.

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Sin, Atonement and Redemption

by

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Sin, Atonement and Redemption

My Theological Background

In an essay such as this, it is always helpful if the author shares something about his or her theological and cultural background. This enables all parties in the dialogue to understand one another better, since life and ideas are integrally related. Indeed, this is an important aspect of biblical holism -- that man is an organic unity, that life and thought, body and soul, are inseparable.

My spiritual roots are in German and Swiss Pietism. My maternal grandfather was originally Jewish and one of my grandmothers was originally Roman Catholic. Both of my grandfathers received their theological training in Basel where theology and spirituality were basically inspired by Pietism. They came to this country as missionaries to German-speaking immigrants and found a place in the Evangelical Synod, a denomination partly Lutheran and partly Reformed. It later merged with the German Reformed church to become the Evangelical and Reformed church. It is now part of the United Church of Christ, a denomination that is basically liberal but that contains a strong evangelical element, especially evident in the laity. I grew up in parsonages in small towns in Indiana and Illinois, where my father served as pastor.

My education was acquired at Elmhurst College and the University of Chicago, where I received the Ph.D. degree in theology in 1957. I have done post-doctoral work at the Universities of

Oxford, Tübingen and Basel. After serving in a parish for 3½ years, I assumed teaching responsibilities at the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary, where I am presently Professor of Theology. Because I have been thoroughly exposed to modernity, I would call my position a post-modern orthodoxy, though I have never succumbed to the beguilements of modernity.

I stand in the broader evangelical tradition, tracing my theological ancestry to the Protestant Reformation and to the spiritual movements of purification subsequent to the Reformation -- Pietism and Puritanism. I also consider myself a Reformed theologian, since I identify with that side of the Reformation that stressed the reality of regeneration in the life of the Christian and the third use of the law (which was Calvin's emphasis). In addition, I regard myself as a catholic theologian, because I seek to maintain continuity with the tradition of the whole church. Moreover, I try to be ecumenical as well, upholding the universality of the mission of the church and the need for reconciliation between all branches of the body of Christ.

Inter-Religious Dialogue

Does a catholic evangelicalism committed to the universal outreach of the gospel make a place for inter-religious dialogue? In my judgment, such dialogue belongs to the wider mission of the church, but we must beware of the pitfalls as well as the dividends in this kind of enterprise. The temptation is to subordinate those things that make Christianity unique and distinctive to a more inclusive religious vision that views all the world religions as legitimate roads to salvation. The reward is that it leads us to

appreciate the partial truths in all religious traditions. It may also open the door to renewed dedication and even genuine conversion to Jesus Christ.

We can enter inter-religious dialogue, as evangelical Christians, because we believe that the truth that comes from God stands in judgment over the beliefs and practices of all religions, which are invariably mixed with egocentric motivations. As evangelicals, our hope is that in dialogue both parties will be converted to Jesus Christ, who by his Spirit makes dialogue possible. Even the sanctified Christian stands in need of further conversion and illumination, since he is only on the way and has not yet arrived.

We hold that non-Christian religions are not wholly devoid of truth because of common grace, the universal grace given by the Holy Spirit for the purpose of preservation against evil. Moreover, our position is that all people were created in the image of God and that this image is still reflected even in those whose thought and life have become darkened by sin. In addition, it is possible to contend that the Holy Spirit may well be working redemptively among non-Christian peoples because they may have access to the Holy Scriptures which are part of the spiritual heritage of some of the world religions (such as Judaism and Islam). Moreover, in countries like Japan the Bible is a best seller; this means that even in Buddhist and Shintoist households the Bible may be available, and where the Word is present, there the Spirit is present too. Because of the widespread accessibility of the Scriptures and because the gospel message is often included even in secular literature throughout the world, albeit in rudimentary form, con-

versions to the true God may occur even in religious environments that are predominantly non-Christian.

It is simplistic to hold that there are only two categories of human beings -- born again Christians and those who are dead in sin. There is also the pre-Christian, one who has been prompted to seek for the mercy and favor of God as a result of being exposed to the message of salvation, either through the reading of Scripture or through hearing the Christian proclamation. This person is genuinely seeking but has not yet made a commitment to Christ. Again, there is the non-Christian who has not yet heard the good news of salvation through Christ. Or he may have been exposed to only a confused or distorted presentation of the message of faith. This person is closed to the gospel out of ignorance or fear more than idolatrous pride. He is crippled by sin, he is spiritually lost, and yet his inner being cries out for the God whom he does not yet know or only dimly knows. Then there is the anti-Christian who has heard the truth that comes from God but who has rejected this truth in preference for his own. This person is actively opposed to the gospel and seeks to extinguish the light that shines upon him. The anti-Christian is committed to a false gospel that contradicts the claims of the Christian faith. The pre-Christian, the non-Christian and the anti-Christian are not yet regenerate, but the first is on the way to regeneration and the second and third are claimed by the grace of divine election for regeneration. The last two are still dead in sin, whereas the pre-Christian has been aroused to flee from sin and the wrath of God. He has been awakened to his misery but is not yet in communion with God in Christ.

All of these types of people may be found in the Christian churches, and all of them may be present in the non-Christian religions as well, despite the proneness to sin and error endemic to human religion. No person can claim to possess the whole truth, but all are pursued by the truth. The Christian can assuredly claim to know the truth through the revelation that has been given to him in Christ, but this truth exists not for him exclusively but for the whole human race. Moreover, this truth stands in judgment over the thoughts and deeds of the Christian as well as the non-Christian. Even the Christian, who has been born again and sanctified, needs to be justified by the grace of God revealed in Christ. In one sense, his condition is more perilous than that of the non-Christian, the person who does not know or who has not yet heard. The Christian has heard and has responded and is therefore accountable to his God for the kind of life he lives and for the kind of witness he makes. He will be judged all the more severely because although he knows the Lord, he may not follow the Lord (cf. Luke 12:47, 48). The Bible makes it clear that judgment begins in the household of God (I Pet. 4:17).

Regarding Jewish-Christian dialogue, there is hope of making some progress because both religions emphasize the historical particularity of divine revelation as opposed to the inclusiveness of universal mystical experience. Moreover, both religions have a common Scripture, the Old Testament. As evangelical Christians, we can assume that our Jewish brothers and sisters who truly search the Scriptures are somehow in contact with the grace that we know to be the grace of reconciliation and redemption. The difference

is that the gospel we proclaim does not merely fulfill the Old Testament law, but it radically calls into question the whole idea of salvation through the law. Furthermore, the Messiah who came to his own people, the Jews, and whom we accept as the Savior of the world, was not the Messiah who was expected. The transition from Judaism to evangelical Christianity can only be one of conversion, though it is a conversion to that which is integral, not alien to the tradition of Israel. Lest this sound arrogant, I insist that the transition from Christianity as an empirical religion to the gospel as a divine revelation is also one of conversion. It is conversion to the truth that we have heard but may not have really understood, a conversion to the truth that we may be seeking for but have not yet found.

A perennial temptation in Christian theology has been Marcionism in which the church has been led to devalue the Old Testament and thereby to sever itself from its Jewish roots. A kind of neo-Marcionism can be detected in both Harnack and Bultmann who saw the religion of the Old Testament as wholly superseded by the message of the gospel. We agree with Calvin that the church of God began with Abraham and that the history of ancient Israel is an integral part of the sacred history of divine revelation culminating in Jesus Christ. The self-revelation of God in Jesus Christ was testified to by the Old Testament prophets, though they did not understand its full implications for their own people or for the world. There is both discontinuity and continuity between the claims of the New Testament and the religion of the Old Testament, and a bona fide Christian theology dare not ignore either of these realities.

The Meaning of Sin

Sin in the total biblical perspective signifies much more than an act of wrongdoing: it connotes a state of ongoing enmity with God. It is not simply the violation of a moral taboo (as in legalistic religion) but wounding the very heart of God. Sin involves, to be sure, a transgression of the moral law, but it is much more than this: it is basically an inclination to lawlessness that resides within the inner recesses of man's being (cf. Gen. 6:5; Ps. 51:5). Sin includes moral failure, missing the mark, but its essence is a lust for power, seeking to be God (Gen. 3:5). Biblical religion tells us that all people have fallen prey to sin (Rom. 3:23; 7:14; Gal. 3:22; I John 1:8), and therefore the whole human race stands in need of deliverance.

The Bible is clear that the inclination to sin, which is also sin, precedes the act of sin (cf. Rom. 7:5; James 1:14, 15; 4:1). This is what led the church to speak of "original sin," the innate desire to make self rather than God the center of the universe. It is not a biological weakness so much as a spiritual infection that is passed on through human generation. As the psalmist says: "The wicked go astray from the womb, they err from their birth, speaking lies" (Ps. 58:3 RSV; cf. Ps. 51:5). Sin resides in the intentions and desires (Gen. 6:5; 8:21; Exod. 20:17), and this is why the person in sin needs a new heart, new motivations, a purification or cleansing of the inward being.

Human being in its essential nature is good, for it was created in the image of divine being. Sin defaces but does not destroy this image. We were created for fellowship with God and with

our neighbor. We were made a little lower than the angels and were given dominion over the world of nature (Ps. 8:5, 6 KJV). The tragedy is that we have forfeited the destiny that might have been ours by seeking to usurp the role of God. The Bible affirms both the grandeur and misery of humankind. We are not zeros but glorious creatures who have gone wrong. Whereas we were intended to be in fellowship with God, we now exist in estrangement from our creator. Whereas we were intended to live in harmony with our fellow human beings and with nature, we now exist in a state of alienation with other people and with the created order.

The core of sin is unbelief, as Calvin saw so well. The prime manifestations of sin are pride, sensuality and fear. The practical consequences of sin include discord in our relations with others, self-absorption, increasing isolation from God and from our fellow human beings, guilt, death and hell. Sin has a collective as well as a personal dimension, for the poison in the heart of man can infect and enslave a whole people. According to Isaiah, it was not just a few wicked individuals but the whole nation that was infected by sin (Isa. 1:4). Sin in the human heart is the ultimate source of racism, nationalism, sexism and imperialism.

Behind sin are the devil and his hosts, the fallen angels who bring temptation to men and women (cf. Mat. 4:1-11; Eph. 6:12; Jude 5-7). The devil is not the cause of sin, for otherwise human beings could not be held accountable for their sin. Yet it is the devil who provides the occasion for sin. In succumbing to temptation man falls into bondage to the devil, described in the Bible

as the powers of darkness. It is Scriptural teaching that one is either in the kingdom of God or in the kingdom of the devil (though the former is more inclusive than the visible church). One cannot serve two masters, and by spurning the mastery of God one falls under the sway of the anti-god powers, the powers of darkness.

Through our sinful striving to gain power and security for ourselves, we lose our freedom. We are still free in the things below, in purely mundane relationships, as Luther perceived, but we are not free in the things above -- in our relationship to God and the moral ideal. In exalting ourselves rather than God, we become helpless to help ourselves. We can no longer will the good, though we yearn for the good. We still retain our free will, but we no longer have the power to do the right. As Jeremiah put it so forcefully: "Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots? Neither can you do good who are accustomed to doing evil" (Jer. 13:23 NIV). Luther described fallen humanity as in bondage to sin, death and the devil, the tyrants that account for all human misery and that Christ came to overthrow.

Augustine gave the illustration of the man who by abstaining from the food that he needed for health so weakened himself that he was no longer able to take food. He remained a human being, created to maintain his health by eating, and yet he was no longer able to eat. Similarly, all human beings by the historical event of the fall have become incapable of that movement toward God which is the very life for which they were created. Yet they remain human beings caught in an intolerable dilemma.

Because of sin, man has become guilty before God, that is,

subject to the penalty that accompanies the violation of God's law. Guilt is not simply a sense of having offended the majesty of God, but it signifies an objective state of existing in enmity with God. One can extinguish the feeling of guilt by denying the fact of sin, but the reality of sin and guilt nevertheless remains. This means that mankind is subject to the penalty that God's law demands, namely, physical and spiritual death.

There are, of course, degrees of guilt: some actions have more deleterious consequences than others. Some acts of wrongdoing cause greater injury to the self and to one's neighbor than other such acts. At the same time, even the smallest sin creates a breach in our relationship with God (James 2:10). Because God's law demands absolute perfection, even one transgression incurs the penalty of judgment and hell. Even though the sins of some persons are not as heinous as the sins of others, before God (coram Deo) all of our righteousness is as "filthy rags" (Isa. 64:6 NIV).

This does not mean that every act that a person commits is evil. It does mean that every act bears the stain of sin. Moreover, the direction of the sinner's action tends deeper and deeper into sin and further and further from God. Sin begets greater sin, and the final end is self-destruction. If sin were allowed to run its course, we would all be without hope.

All people have a consciousness of guilt, but only the believer can be convicted of sin. Indeed, we only begin to know the depth of our sin when we are confronted by the holiness of God (Isa. 6:1-5; I Kings 17:18; Ps. 32:4, 5; 51:4; Luke 5:8). We do not know our sin fully until we are exposed to the love of God re-

vealed in Jesus Christ. When we are awakened to the full implications of his sacrifice, then we come to realize the depths of our iniquity.

The biblical understanding of sin is often associated with the Hellenic conception of hubris, particularly as this is found among the Greek tragedians, but this is a profound mistake. Hubris signifies heroic self-affirmation in which one transgresses the limits assigned by the gods or by fate. It springs from finitude, not from a perverse will. It is a kind of moral insolence which challenges or defies the gods. But sin signifies an idolatrous pride which seeks to dethrone the gods. The tragic hero is not responsible for his plight because of ignorance of the realities of the situation in which he finds himself. The sinner is responsible because he knowingly and willingly rebels against his creator. Hubris is self-elevation which offends the gods, whereas sin is rebellion against the rule of God. Hubris is immoderation; sin, on the other hand, is hardness of heart.

Neither should sin be confounded with the modern understanding of sickness. Sin is not emotional unbalance but misplaced allegiance. It signifies not instability but wickedness. It is not a pathological state so much as a state of guilt. Sickness, both physical and mental, may well flow from sin, because man is a unity, and if he is morally off center, this is bound to affect every part of his being. Sin may be conceived of as a spiritual sickness, however, since it signifies a corruption of our inner being, the area of our relationship to the transcendent. At the same time, this is not to infer that we are no longer culpable. Once we sin,

we become subject to sin, and yet because we sin deliberately or wilfully we must suffer the moral consequences of our wrongdoing.

Finally, sin should not be equated with ignorance. This was a temptation in the tradition of Christian mysticism, which drew heavily upon Platonism and Neoplatonism. It was said that humans sin because of a deficiency in understanding or knowledge. Once we know the right, then we will do it. But this makes education or enlightenment a false panacea for human ills. It also overlooks the fact that sin is not merely an absence of the good nor a lack of the knowledge of the good but an assault upon the good. It certainly entails privation, but even more it signifies "man in revolt" (Emil Brunner).

Sin may well involve ignorance, but this is a guilty ignorance. We hide ourselves from the truth, because we are afraid to face up to the truth. We prefer to be ignorant of the evil that surrounds us or that resides within us, because then we think that we need not assume responsibility for combating evil. Ironically, by choosing the path of ignorance, we become all the more culpable, for we then become unwitting accomplices in evil.

Sin in the biblical view is not just missing the mark or failing to do the right. It connotes a state of being mesmerized or paralyzed by an evil spell or force. In Paul's theology, sin is almost a personal, malevolent power that holds humanity in its grasp. The answer to sin lies not in a new determination to improve ourselves but in a power superior to that of sin and the devil, namely, the living God himself. The solution to sin lies not in increased moral effort but in the grace of God (cf. Luke 12:27, 28; Rom. 7:14 ff.; 9:16; 11:6; II Tim. 1:9).

The Substitutionary Atonement

Evangelical theology holds that the threat and power of sin are overcome by the vicarious, atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The word "atonement" is related to many other biblical words, including expiation, propitiation, ransom, reconciliation and sacrifice. It is also associated with "satisfaction", a nonbiblical word which came to be used in the theology of the church to elucidate and explicate the meaning of the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. The English word "atone" is derived from the phrase "at one", and therefore atonement basically indicates a harmonious personal relationship with God. In its modern English usage, it refers to the process by which the hindrances to reconciliation with God are removed.

Biblical scholars have been divided concerning whether the Hebrew kaphar and its cognates and the Greek hilastērion indicate expiation, the blotting out of sin, or propitiation, the turning away of the wrath of God. There has also been dispute concerning the meaning of reconciliation (katallagē) -- whether its reference is to mollifying the offended holiness of God or to bringing an estranged humanity into harmonious relationship with a God who already forgives and who does not need to be reconciled.

It is my position that all these meanings can be discerned in Scripture, in both the Old and New Testaments. Atonement is in the final analysis a mystery, the mystery of how the divine love and the divine holiness are reconciled within the Godhead. It is clear that because God is holy and because his law is inviolable,

sin against his law has to be paid for or atoned. God's holiness needs to be assuaged and man's alienation against God needs to be overcome. Reconciliation involves a mutual concord between both parties in the broken relationship.

Yet the Bible insists that God's favor cannot be bought or earned by prayers or animal sacrifices, nor can it be earned by meritorious conduct. This is because human sin makes all of our sacrifices unworthy in the sight of God. If atonement is to be made, it has to be planned and carried out by God himself. In the Old Testament, it is God who takes the initiative in arranging the sacrificial system by which ritual and moral uncleanness are purged by the shedding of blood. In certain passages of what critical scholars call "Second Isaiah," the atonement is seen as provided by a divinely-sent servant of the Lord who was "wounded for our transgressions" and who "bore the sin of many" (Isa. 53:5, 12 RSV).

In the New Testament, atonement is related specifically and exclusively to the sacrificial life and death of Jesus Christ. It is made clear that God did not just conceive and initiate the plan of salvation, but God was in Christ carrying it forward to completion (II Cor. 5:18, 19). What Christ did for humankind, God himself was doing in Christ. While the incarnation itself may be seen as a first step in the accomplishment of atonement, since it indicates that God identified himself with human misery, the atoning work of Christ is especially associated with his death on the cross: He came "to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45); "We were reconciled to God by the death of his Son" (Rom. 5:10); We

"have been brought near in the blood of Christ" (Eph. 2:13); "He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree" (I Pet. 2:24); Christ was "offered once to bear the sins of many" (Heb. 9:28). (All RSV).

Man needs atonement because he is accountable for his sins to God. The law of God demands that the penalty for sin be paid. Sin against an infinite God demands an infinite penalty. Because as a sinner man cannot provide the perfect sacrifice, God himself takes human form and as the God-man presents the sacrifice for the remission of sins by which man is delivered from the penalty of the law -- the wrath and judgment of God. This means that the cross of Christ is a sin-offering or guilt-offering, and Jesus is therefore a sin-bearer and mediator. In Hebrews 10:12 Christ's death is called a "sacrifice for sins", and in Ephesians 5:2 it is referred to as a "sacrifice to God" (RSV). The redemptive self-oblation of the suffering servant of the Lord in Isaiah is designated as a "guilt offering" (Isa. 53:10 NIV).

Yet to see the sacrifice on the cross as simply the satisfaction of the legal requirements of the law would be to miss the full depth and scope of this sacrifice. Scripture tells us that there was a cross in the heart of God before the cross in history (cf. I Pet. 1:20; Rev. 13:8). Through his infinite love, God willed the deliverance of the sinner even before the sacrifice for sin offered by Christ. The cross of Christ was provided so that God's love might find a way to us. The gospel is that God decided to identify himself with the travails of a fallen humanity. In the person of Christ he took upon himself the guilt and pain of

sin so that an accursed race might go free, so that his inviolable law might be satisfied. The key to the atonement lies not in the sacrifice of human innocence but in God's self-sacrifice.

The incursion of God's love into human history does not set aside the law but brings about its vindication. The cross signifies not a relaxation of the law of God but its execution. At the same time, God's forgiveness goes beyond the law, since the merits of Christ are superabundant (Thomas Aquinas). God's love fulfills the law but also transcends it, providing not only pardon for sin but also eternal fellowship with himself and with all the saints. The glory that he is preparing for us is beyond what we could ever deserve or imagine (cf. I Cor. 2:9).

The atonement also carries with it the note of triumph over the powers that hold humankind in enslavement (Col. 2:15). It signifies victory not only over sin and death but also over the demonic hosts of wickedness who keep the world in subjection by their subterfuges. The church fathers in particular emphasized this aspect of the atonement. The cross is the pivotal center of the atoning action of God in Christ, but the resurrection is the glorious culmination of this action. Through his resurrection, Christ dethrones the principalities and powers and sets the sinner free. This means that Jesus is not only sin-bearer and God-revealer but also conquering king.

Scripture also tells us that the atonement of Christ was unrepeatable and once for all times (Heb. 9:25, 26, 28; 10:12, 14). It does not have to be completed in heaven in an investigative judgment (as Seventh-Day Adventists contend), nor does it have to

be repeated on the altar in the form of the sacrifice of the mass (an idea found in traditional Roman Catholicism). Christ is now at the right hand of God the Father making intercession for us. He continues to identify with our afflictions, but his atoning work is finished. His prayer is that we acknowledge his work of salvation and that we begin to live as delivered and pardoned human beings.

Even while Scripture makes clear that Christ effects our salvation through his death on the cross and his resurrection from the grave and does not just make salvation possible, it is also insistent that the atonement is ineffectual for salvation apart from personal faith. This access to God's grace is ours only "through our faith in him" (Eph. 3:12 RSV). Paul says that God put Christ forward "as an expiation by his blood, to be received by faith" (Rom. 3:25 RSV). Faith is the subjective pole of the atonement, just as the cross of Christ is the objective pole. But this does not mean that in and of ourselves we contribute to the atonement. Faith is made possible because Christ reaches out to us from the cross by his Spirit in order to seal the remission of sins in our hearts. When we say that Christ alone effects our salvation (<u>solus Christus</u>), we mean not only Christ dying for us on the cross but Christ living within us by his Spirit. We are awakened to faith under the impact of the objective atoning work of Christ on the cross. The atonement reaches its goal when we are united with Christ through faith. We in no way share in his atoning work, but we receive the benefits of his atoning work when we believe and obey.

The Drama of Redemption

In the context of this study, "redemption" is being used to refer to the whole process of salvation, though in the narrow sense it means buying back from slavery. In the Old Testament, redemption or salvation pertains mainly to concrete and material deliverance. It also carries the connotation of corporate deliverance, as when the people of Israel were set free from their bondage in Egypt and brought to the promised land. In some cases, redemption also has reference to interior personal salvation in the sense of a deliverance from sin and the joy of forgiveness (cf. Ps. 26:11; 49:15; 51:14; 69:18; Job 19:25).

In the New Testament, redemption is given a more definitely spiritual meaning: deliverance from the guilt and penalty of sin. It also connotes salvation from the demonic powers of darkness, which are only hinted at in the Old Testament. Basically salvation or redemption is conceived holistically, that is, it refers to the restoration and healing of the whole person. This is why redemption is associated with the resurrection of the body rather than with the immortality of the soul.

The drama of redemption begins even before the creation when God chose to identify himself with his children even in their affliction and anguish. The apostle declares that Jesus "was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake" (I Pet. 1:20 NIV). Redemption begins in the divine election of humankind to salvation in Jesus Christ. Before the decision of faith, even before creation, there is the mystery of predestination (cf. Rom. 8:28-30). But the Bible nowhere speaks

of a decree of reprobation, i.e., that some people are predestined to damnation even before their birth. Predestination is essentially good news, for it means that the whole human race is under the sign of election, the sign of the cross. Just as we assert a universal atonement, so we must also affirm a universal election to salvation. This does not mean that people are automatically saved, since they have to respond to God's gracious offer of election and redemption. It does mean that they are intended by their creator for a glorious destiny, if they will only repent of their sins and hear the good news and be forgiven.

In the older liberal theology, redemption was held to be simply the fulfillment of creation, creation raised to its maximum heights. In this view Christology was reinterpreted as well: Jesus now became the exemplar of perfected human nature rather than the divine Savior from sin. In the biblical view, on the contrary, redemption is prior to creation, and the role of creation is to serve redemption. We are told that even at the creation, the powers of darkness were defeated and that humankind was created as a delivered people (see Ps. 74:13, 14). Karl Barth has developed this theme in his Church Dogmatics Volume III, Part 3.

If creation is the first stage of redemption, the second is reconciliation where God acts to remove the discord that separates fallen humanity from his presence and favor. Among the integral elements of reconciliation are regeneration, justification, sanctification and vocation or calling.

Justification (dikaiosunē) is often equated with redemption and reconciliation, but in its basic meaning it is a declaration

of acquittal given by the holy God to the condemned sinner. Justification as it is used in the New Testament is essentially a forensic or legal term, though it also has a mystical and an eschatological dimension. God's forgiveness is not cheap and is conditional on his law being kept inviolable. When God justifies the sinner, the law is not abolished and the righteousness of God is not violated. This is because Jesus Christ stands in our place as our Advocate and Mediator. His perfect righteousness covers our sinfulness and imperfect righteousness, and therefore we are accounted worthy in the sight of God. The basis of our justification is the vicarious, perfect righteousness of Christ, not an indwelling, personal righteousness.

The righteousness of God is not only imputed to the sinner, but it is imparted to the sinner as well, and this is why in addition to justification we must speak of regeneration and sanctification. Justification is God's decision on man, and regeneration is God's work within man. Our justification is not conditional on our personal righteousness, however; the latter is the result and evidence of our justification. Paul referred to the justification of the ungodly (Rom. 4:5; 5:6), and Luther continued this theme with even greater emphasis. Whereas justification is perfect, because the righteousness of Christ is perfect, our regeneration and sanctification are imperfect because the Holy Spirit does not complete his work in our lives until the time of death. Some theologians have speculated that we are left in a condition of vulnerability to sin so that we might be kept humble, so that we might flee ever again to the righteousness of Christ that alone can save

us from sin, death and hell. At the same time, because we have Christ dwelling in our hearts through faith, we have the confidence of overcoming every sin, of mastering every temptation. The Christian life is a life of victory as well as of struggle. It is characterized by assurance as well as hope, but the assurance is based not on our own strength or virtue but on the promise of Christ to deliver all who come to him in repentance and faith.

Regeneration, which is the new birth into the kingdom of God, and sanctification, which is growth in holiness, are both dependent on justification, which is God's decision to accept us into his favor in the light of the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. Justification is not an event limited to the past but an ever present offer that we need to respond to again and again if we are to make progress in the Christian life. It has a definite beginning, but its impact continues throughout the whole of Christian life. Regeneration might be likened to the fertile soil; sanctification is the beautiful flower that springs from this fertile soil; justification is the rain that keeps the soil fertile.

Evangelical Christianity affirms that we are justified by faith alone. This is to say, our responsibility in salvation is simply to acknowledge and receive the perfect righteousness of Christ which covers our sins like a white robe (cf. Isa. 61:10; Zech. 3:3-5; Rev. 7:9). Faith is not a human virtue but a work of God within us impelling us to believe and respond. It is an inward awakening to the significance of the cross and resurrection of Christ, an awakening brought about by the Spirit of God. Justification by faith is not a matter of the righteousness of human

striving but a full confidence in the atonement of Christ for our sins.

The obedience of faith or works of love must follow the gift of faith. Whereas we are passive when the rain of grace falls upon us, we become active as we seek to demonstrate our gratefulness for what God has done for us in Christ. Our obedience is the sign but not the price of God's favor. We cannot merit either the grace of justification or the grace of sanctification. We can, however, cooperate with God in working out the sanctification that he has planned for us. We are justified by faith alone, but we are not sanctified apart from works of love.

The final stage of the drama of redemption is glorification, when we are perfected in the image of Christ. Glorification means a restored and transfigured humanity. It entails the resurrection of the body and eternal life in fellowship with God and all the saints. It involves a new heaven and a new earth (Isa. 66:22; Rev. 21:1), not the negation but the transformation of creation. It signifies a cataclysmic intervention of God into human history to consummate the kingdom that has already been inaugurated by the coming of Christ.

Evangelical Christianity does not hesitate to speak of a millennial hope before the final consummation when some of God's promises will be realized on earth. This is why we can face the immediate future as well as the absolute future with optimism because we know that God is in control. Jesus Christ is even now Lord of the world, and the principalities and powers are made to serve his will and purpose even in their destructive work. God

does not cause evil, but he brings good out of evil. Even in the most horrendous calamities, the Spirit of God is at work confirming the divine promise that all things work together for good for those who know God (Rom. 8:28).

The Christian is summoned not only to faith but also to vocation, which comprises a fourth aspect of reconciliation. Not only Christians but all people are called to be ambassadors and witnesses of the grace of Christ which has been poured out for all and which is intended for all. Even though we will find ourselves in many different occupations, our vocation is to be signs and witnesses of the redemption that God has procured for us in Christ. We will all realize this holy vocation in different ways, but if our motivations are pure, we will endeavor to give all the glory to God alone and not to ourselves, not even to the church.

The life of discipleship is a demonstration of costly grace, the grace that cost God the life of his own Son and the grace that may cost us our reputations, our health, the love of family and friends and even our lives. To take up the cross and follow Christ entails suffering, but this suffering does not make reparation for sin, as did the suffering of Christ. Our suffering is a sign and witness to his suffering that alone atones for the sins of the world. Our suffering does not procure salvation as did the cross of Christ; instead, it reveals and upholds his salvation before the world. In our discipleship, we work out the implications of a salvation already given (cf. Phil. 2:12, 13), but we do not lay hold of a salvation that is not yet ours. We prepare ourselves to enjoy the glory which is the crown and goal of salvation, but our

suffering does not merit this glory, for this glory is already assured to us through justification. Indeed, if we would die before undergoing the purifying process of sanctification in this life, we would still be assured of heaven, for the title to heaven is already ours through faith alone (cf. Luke 23:39-43).

Discipleship entails striving to keep the commandments, not to gain salvation but to show our gratefulness and loving appreciation for all that God has done for us in Christ. We cannot fulfill all that the law demands, but we can keep the law, because we have the Holy Spirit living and working within us. Yet because impure motivations continue to reside within us, even when we are being sanctified through obedience to the law, we must confess that we are still only sinners saved by grace. After having done all, we are still unworthy servants (Luke 17:10), and therefore we can claim our heavenly inheritance only on the basis of the alien righteousness of Christ.

Salvation by Grace

With the leading spokesmen of evangelical Christianity -- Augustine, Luther, Calvin and Barth -- we affirm that we are justified and redeemed by grace alone (sola gratia). Our works are the fruits and evidences of a grace already assured to us through the sacrifice of Christ on Calvary and sealed within us by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Our salvation is assured "not because of deeds done by us in righteousness, but in virtue of his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:5 RSV). Because grace is invincible and effectual,

theologians in our tradition have been led to speak of "sovereign grace," the grace that accomplishes what it sets out to do.

We can be heralds of grace and servants of grace, but we cannot be winners of grace, since grace is always given to the undeserving. Likewise, we cannot be dispensers of grace, for grace is not within our power or under our control. We can be co-workers with God in making known the victory of grace, but we can never be co-mediators or co-redeemers with Christ. We are the objects of grace, not the source or cause of grace.

Even sanctified Christians continue to be sinners and therefore stand in need of the grace of God. We now have power over sin through grace, but we cannot escape the presence of sin either within or around us. We are still vulnerable to sin, and this is why we must cling to grace all the more. To deny that Christians have sin is to deny the gospel and to render the work of Jesus Christ of no account (cf. I John 2:12; 4:10; Rev. 1:5).

The Reformed and Evangelical doctrine of sola gratia does not imply a divine determinism that overrules the will and personality of human beings. Grace does not annul human freedom but restores it to its true purpose -- communion with God and fellowship with the people of God. True freedom is not the anarchic freedom to will error as well as truth but the freedom given to us at creation that results in life and happiness. True freedom is to live according to the law of our being, namely in communion with our Creator and Redeemer. A railway engine is meant to run on tracks, and if it remains on the tracks it finds freedom. But if in order to gain freedom, it jumps the tracks the result is not

freedom but ruin.

Through sin we have lost the capacity to be free in the way God intended. We still possess a free will, but we lack the power to use this will to do the good or to come to God. Our free will is enslaved by the passions of the flesh, which signify not simply physical lusts but unlawful spiritual cravings. When grace comes upon us, we receive new life -- creative moral power. Our freedom is restored; we can now begin to live in obedience even though imperfectly. Because free will in and of itself is incapable of setting us on the road to life, evangelical Christians prefer to speak of Christian liberty, the liberated will which is enabled to obey through grace.

The reconciling act of God in Jesus Christ has for its purpose the new life in Christ. Christ "died. . . that. . . we might live with him" (I Thes. 5:10 RSV). Through this restored relationship to God, the sinner's conscience is cleansed; he is now equipped with new moral power (II Pet. 1:3-7). He is delivered from the tyranny of sin and enabled to live for Christ with Christ reigning as Lord in his life (II Cor. 5:14, 15; Rom. 14:8, 9).

Grace does not exclude resistance but overcomes it. Grace prevails even when men and women persist in living by their own power. The prophet Isaiah declared: "I will strengthen you, though you have not acknowledged me" (Isa. 45:5 NIV; cf. Jer. 20:7). God's loving mercy is experienced as wrath when we deny and reject it, but it nevertheless gains mastery over our lives. His grace appears in the form of judgment when we live as though grace had not been given, but it is never permanently withdrawn from us. Because we can thwart

the intention of grace and thereby arouse the wrath of God, we must not be complacent in our state of grace. Paul declared: "You have received the grace of God; do not let it go for nothing" (II Cor. 6:1 NEB; cf. Heb. 12:15).

To affirm salvation by grace alone is not to deny the call to sainthood that is given to all Christians, and indeed to all of God's people. Grace is given not that we might continue to live in sin but that we might begin to obey and conform our wills to the will of the Father in heaven (cf. Rom. 6:15-19). The purpose of grace is obedience under the cross, a life of holiness that will be well-pleasing to God. It can be pleasing to God, however, not because of its intrinsic merits but because it is grounded in and directed by grace.

The church fathers often said that God became man so that man might become as God. They did not mean that humanity would be raised to the level of deity but that humanity might be raised to fellowship with deity. They also believed that people might come to reflect in their own lives the goodness of divinity. The man-god, the Christian goal according to Athanasius, can never be the equivalent of the God-man, who is Jesus Christ. Between the two, there is an infinite qualitative difference. At the same time, the saint, who never ceases to be a sinner, can mirror and attest the reality of divine grace that was fully embodied in Jesus Christ alone. He can come to be a veritable sign of the passion and victory of Jesus Christ. His holiness is derivative, not inherent; it always points beyond itself to the perfect holiness that is in Christ. The drama of redemption is fulfilled when God's

people become a holy people, a people who live by divine forgiveness but who are at the same time concerned to demonstrate the righteousness of God in their lives. This was the vision of the Hebrew prophets as well as of the apostles and the church fathers. It is the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ and the subsequent outpouring of the Holy Spirit that make it possible for this vision to be at least partially realized in earthly history. The consummation of the kingdom lies beyond history, but the upbuilding and advancement of the kingdom take place now as the sons and daughters of the new age proclaim the good news of the coming of God's all-conquering grace into the world of sin and death.

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ON GOD AND EVIL

As you know, the topic of our session here tonight is the Holocaust, and I am supposed to provide a Christian perspective on that topic. Actually, much of what I will say here will not be specially and uniquely about the Holocaust. It will be somewhat more general than that, being as you might say, about the Holocaust and other terrible things. There might be some Christian insight which is, in some special way, about that awful tragedy which overtook the Jews of Europe in the 30's and 40's of this century, an insight which would exhibit and illuminate the specific meaning of that particular historical occurrence. There might, I say, be some such Christian insight. But if there is, I do not know what it is. So I cannot say anything about it.

I can say, however, that no Christian - or, at least, no Christian who is at all sensitive to the doctrinal underpinnings and world-view of his own religion - can be radically surprised by the Holocaust. Of course, he might be surprised in detail, and he might be profoundly saddened by what happened. But he cannot be radically surprised by it. For the orthodox Christian view of the human condition is shot through with dark elements. It is filled with notions such as those of sin and depravity, and of the corruption and deceitfulness of the human heart. Of course, it is also filled with elements of hope, of the redemption wrought by God Himself, of the possibility of forgiveness and a new life for the most degraded of sinners, of the new heart which God will give to men. Hope and darkness lie side by side in the Gospel. And the darkness is real. I was about to say that it is as real as the hope, but that would not be quite correct. For I think it is part of the Christian view that love is deeper than hate, that good is stronger than evil, that it is God and not Satan who is the original of all beings. If that is so, then hope reaches into a depth beyond despair, and connects with the bedrock of all

that is. But if the darkness of the world is not its deepest element, it is not shallow either. Sin and depravity are real, perhaps more real than many of us have yet really imagined. And perhaps we, or our children, will live to see things worse than the Holocaust.

A Christian who is at all reflective about his own faith can hardly miss the prominence of that dark element in its view of the world. After all, the most widely recognized symbol of Christianity is the cross, that ancient instrument of torture and execution. But Christians take the cross to be not only symbolic (though, of course, it is a symbol), but also to be historical. It is, they believe, a real event and a pivotal event in the act of redemption, the act in which God acknowledges and accepts and, in some way, undoes the evil of the world. And no Christian, I say, who remembers the cross can be radically surprised by a tragedy like the Holocaust.

But if a Christian cannot be radically surprised by the Holocaust, what does he, or what can he, say about it? Or if not about the Holocaust specifically, what can a Christian say in the face of the whole complex of suffering and sin, of tragedy and terror which overlies all human life? This question is, I suppose, one of the many versions of the celebrated problem of evil. The goodness of God on the one hand, and the evil of the world on the other - how can one hold them together in a single understanding, or even in a single act of faith? Or can one do so? It is to this topic that I devote most of my talk tonight.

Much, but not all, of what I say will consist of making some distinctions which will, I hope, be of help in our thinking. And the first of these is a distinction among various contexts in which one might try to speak of the significance of evil. There is, no doubt, a range of such contexts. I will mention two which lie near the extremes of that range. One of these contexts

is that of the ash heap, the other that of the lecture hall. And it may be that we should say much different things - not contradictory or incompatible things, but different things nevertheless - on the ash heap from those that we say in the lecture room.

Sometimes, that is, when we speak about evil we speak not only about suffering but also within suffering, our own suffering and despair or that of our hearers. We speak, perhaps, between our sobs, or those who listen hear us between their sobs. That is the context of the ash heap. But it is totally unrealistic to construe our situation as if we were continuously immersed in an ocean of sorrow and suffering, overwhelmed by the tragedies of life. That is simply not so. For most of us, at any rate, there are times when we are not overwhelmed, when we can "distance" ourselves, so to speak, from our own pains, so as to consider them more or less dispassionately. And this is the context, whether it be a context of speaking or of hearing, which I call that of the lecture hall.

There is a sense in which the ash heap is more basic to the problem of evil than is the lecture hall. For our discourse about evil, regardless of the context in which it is delivered, must be <u>about</u> the ash heap. If there were no ash heap - one sort of ash heap or another - there would be no problem of evil to be discussed in the lecture hall. In that sense the ash heap is primary, and the lecture hall is derivative and secondary.

To recognize this primacy of the ash heap, however, requires us also to recognize the legitimacy of the lecture hall. We are not always on the ash heap, and we need not restrict our thinking about evil to those times when we are. We need not be drunk to think about wine, and we need not be in England to sing about London Bridge.

This distinction has an immediate application, of course, to our own situation. Some 30 to 40 years ago several millions of European Jews were

passing through the concentration camps and the death chambers. But we tonight are not in Belsen or in Ravensbruck. We are in Deerfield. We can no doubt remember, and to some extent feel, our own troubles. But hardly any of us came into this room tonight in tears. By and large, our own context here for these few days is that of the lecture hall. We will not improve our thinking by pretending otherwise. And so what we say and do here must be adapted to that context.

As I said earlier, I believe that substantially different sorts of speech and action may be appropriate to these different contexts. And it is unilluminating and unhelpful to criticize what is done in one context as if it were meant for the other. When someone attempts to comfort a parent beside a tiny grave, it is not useful to complain that he does not speak in numbered propositions like a Cambridge philosopher, that he does not draw every fine distinction, and the like. It is also unhelpful to complain about some rather analytic and dispassionate discussion of this topic, that it would not comfort the bereaved or that one cannot imagine giving that lecture in the shower rooms of Buchenwald. Perhaps, indeed, it would not comfort those who weep, or it would be out of place in the death chamber. But the analytic discussion may sometimes embody some important truth about evil, and one which it would be valuable to learn in an appropriate place. It might even involve a truth which will comfort us in some time of sorrow, even if we could not learn it in the middle of that sorrow.

A final observation about this distinction. One typically thinks about the lecture hall as a place where one either speaks or listens to a speech, and if one is doing neither then he may as well go home. Perhaps even in this case we overestimate the importance of talking, but I will not quarrel much with it here, since I am myself making a speech. But in the case of

the ash heap we are not even tempted to think that talking is the only important thing to do. My phrase, "the ash heap", is taken of course from the book of Job. In that ancient story we read that Job's friends, hearing of his troubles, came to see him. And when they saw him, we read, "they sat with him on the ground seven days and seven nights, and no one spoke a word to him, for they saw that his suffering was very great." That silent sympathy, sitting with Job among the ashes, may have been the best thing which his friends did for Job. And it may often be that the best thing we can do for someone who is suffering is to put an arm around their shoulders, to weep with them, or something of the sort. That does not mean that nothing can be said about evil. It means that not every time is the right time to say it.

Well, so much for the first distinction.

The second distinction concerns the initial orientation which the participants bring to any given discussion of this topic. In the sense in which I think of this orientation here, different participants in a single discussion may have different orientations. Such differences may generate serious obstacles to any useful progress, unless some of the participants can adjust, in some way, to orientations other than their own. But maybe what is involved here will become clearer with an example or two.

Some of you here are no doubt familiar with Elie Wiesel's striking play, The Trial of God. In that play, Berish and his demented daughter are presented as the only two survivors of a vicious pogrom in the town of Shamgorod. Some time later an itinerant band of Jewish actors arrives in Shamgorod, unaware of the tragedy which has occurred there. It is the time of the feast of Purim, when apparently it was the custom for the Jewish community to present public plays and farces. Berish insists that the traveling actors must put on a farce, and the farce they must play is that of

the trial of God. And in the end they do. Or at least they begin.

Now, it seems plausible to suppose that someone who is eager to prosecute the trial of God, someone who insists that this and nothing else will mark this feast of Purim, is not an unbiased or impartial inquirer into the relationship between God and evil. One would not ordinarily insist in this way on the trial of just anyone taken at random. It cannot be that God just had the bad luck to be picked for the trial in Shamgorod. No, Berish must already suspect - or, more likely, he must already believe - that God is guilty. When the trial of God begins, or when Wiesel's play opens, Berish has already an idea at hand. And if he puts his idea in the form of a question, something like "Why, God, did you allow this?", then his question has the force of an accusation.

Now, to say that Berish is not unbiased, or to say that he feels like accusing God, is not to criticize him. We do not have a general duty to be always undecided about everything, to be impartial in every proceding, never to make an accusation, or anything of the sort. Indeed, it may be that the main reason for having an open mind at some time and about some question is that this may enable us to cease someday from having an open mind about that question. It may enable us, that is, to close our minds upon some relevant truth. The fact that Berish already has an opinion about God cannot then, by itself, be taken as representing some defect in him. But it is a fact about him, a fact which bears upon what he is likely to say about God and evil. Even more important, it is a fact which bears on the question of what might be a useful thing for someone else to say to him about that topic.

But not everyone who thinks about God and evil need have Berish's orientation or state of mind. It is quite possible

to ask what seems superficially to be the same question, "Why, God, did You allow this?", from almost the opposite standpoint. It can be asked by someone who has no inclination at all to think that God is guilty, and who has no intention at all of putting forward an accusation. Such a person may have no doubt about the goodness and love of God, and he may be confident that God has some satisfactory reason for allowing the tragedy. But he asks in order to learn something, to know what that reason is.

Neither of these people, of course, is bound to receive an answer to his question. The person who arranges for the trial of God may find that God does not appear for that occasion. Maybe he will have to make do, as best he can, with some poor surrogate for the divine presence. Even Wiesel's traveling players find it surprisingly difficult to locate someone who will appear as God's attorney. And the person who does in the end play that role turns out to have a surprising qualification for it. But whoever it is who undertakes the defense of God, we may be forgiven if we suspect that God Himself might have conducted the defense in a different way. Perhaps, indeed, some day He will.

The person, too, who asks to learn may possibly go away unsatisfied. He may be unable to penetrate beyond generalities about "some good purpose," and the like, without finding any specific insight about the particular evil which occupies him. I have already said that I find myself in more or less of that position with respect to the Holocaust. Of course, the fact that I have no very illuminating and specific insight about this occurrence does not at all guarantee that no one does. Perhaps even here and tonight we may find some such

illumination. But, in general, there will be many evils for which we probably will not. And I know of no guarantee that this will be one of the exceptions.

Why is it that, perhaps, neither of these sorts of questioners receives the response for which he asks? Why does God not appear in person for the trial of God, making His own defense, instead of leaving it to theologians, philosophers, and people of similar ilk? Or why does He not reveal to the man or woman of faith the specific meaning of the evils which befall them and those whom they love? That, too, I do not know. We can, of course, speculate about possibilities. We can say--some, no doubt, will really be inclined to say---that God does not do these things because there is no God. And others, perhaps more picturesquely, may say that God does not answer the question of faith because He has no reason to put forth for the evils which He has allowed, and He does not come to His trial in person because He is ashamed to meet His accusers face to face. These are, however, not the only possibilities. In a difficult but provocative novel, a 20th century Christian writer, C.S.Lewis, suggests that God cannot now meet us face to face because we ourselves do not yet have faces. We are not yet persons enough, I suppose he means, to sustain our end of that conversation. For a father to undertake to speak "man to man," as we sometimes say, with his infant son would be at best a sort of joke. Someday, of course, father and son may speak in that way. But not yet. Something else must happen first, a different intercourse between the man and his son--not man to man talk, but baby talk and play and discipline and puzzlement and a hundred other things. And after that, perhaps, they will be able to meet as

man and man, face to face. And maybe something like that is true of ourselves and God.

Christianity, after all, does not represent God as being very much concerned Himself to deliver lectures about evil, or to write explanations of it. But neither does it represent Him as indifferent to it, or unconcerned about the fact that the world is trapped in a tangled net of pain and crime, of hatred and hurt. The Gospel is the good news of the redemption of the world from the grip of evil, or a rdemption achieved by God Himself accepting the sin and the duffering of the world into Himself, to swallow it up and break its power, to make in the end all things new. But when we have gone through that process, when we look back at evil from a vantage point different from the one we have now, then perhaps we shall be able to ask different questions about it, better questions than those which we can now frame. And we shall be able to hear something which now we could not bear to hear.

I have been speaking about my second distinction, that of the orientation one brings to the discussion of evil. At one extreme there is the orientation of faith, of the person who thinks aoubt evil against a background of confidence in the goodness and love of God. Near the other extreme is the orientation of doubt or accusation or disbelief, of the person who finds in evil a reason for rejecting the confidenceoof the believer. And of course there will be still other orientations scattered about this area. My own feeling is that all of these should be recognized as legitimate. The person of faith should recognize that some other people have real doubts, or even firm convictions in the opposite direction. And those people should also recognize, in their turn, that there are people without

those doubts. But in recognizing these other positions as genuine none of these parties needs to suggest that these positions are all equally true, or valid, or well-founded, or anything of the sort. That, it seems to me, is a kind of nonsense, and sort of nonsense which contributes nothing to the discussion.

There are people, for example, who say that the occurrence of evil in the world is incompatible with the existence of God as He is represented in the Christian faith. Since the evil is obvious they are inclined to infer that there is no God, or at least no such God as Christians worship. I think there are people who really do believe in that line of inference. I accept them as participants in the conversation about evil. But I also hold that they are mistaken in their premise, and hence in their inference as well. They, no doubt, believe that I am mistaken. Our conversation, if it is to proceed openly and honestly, must begin with a recognition of these opposed suspicions or convictions. How can it proceed? Perhaps I may close by indicating some of what I think may usefully be said in it from my own standpoint.

One useful thing, when faced with some argument or objection based upon evil, is to make that argument as clear and open as we can. Since it is the objector's argument, it would be best, of course, if he or she were the one to clarify it. But I suppose that the rest of us might help too. Many of you, for example, will be familiar with David Hume's famous discussion of religious topics in a book called Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion. In that book, written as a fictional conversation, there is a character named "Philo," who is often

taken to represent Hume's own views, more or less. Toward the end of the book Philo, discussing the significance of evil, says:

> Why is there any misery at all in the world? Not by chance surely. From some cause then. Is it from the intention of the Deity? But he is perfectly benevolent. Is it contrary to his intention? But he is almighty. Nothing can shake the solidity of this reasoning, so short, so clear, so decisive.....

Here, then, we have a piece of reasoning which Hume (or Philo) says is solid, short, clear, and decisive. But it is a curious argument. For one thing, its conclusion is unexpressed, though we may guess that it is supposed to conclude that there exists no such God as Christians claim. But even more curious is the fact that half of this alleged argument is expressed in questions. Let me read it again.

> Why is there any misery at all in the world? Not by chance surely. From some cause then. Is it from the intention of the Deity? But he is perfectly benevolent. Is it contrary to his intention? But he is almighty. Nothing can shake the solidity of this reasoning, so short, so clear, so decisive.....

every other sentence in that professed course of reasoning is a question. What is going on?

Rhetorically, the device is effective. That is, a person may well find himself puzzled by some of Philo's questions. He may not readily think of any satisfying answer to them. And he may then

slide into thinking that, since he cannot answer Philo's questions, Philo's argument must indeed be decisive as he claims. That, however, would be a mistake. Nothing of interest follows from the fact--if it is a fact--that one or another of us does not know the answer to these questions. Of course, it might be thought that Philo himself has some answers in mind, plain statements or propositions representing Philo's beliefs, answers from which something of interest and importance might indeed follow. If so, fine. In my opinion, a person like Philo should be encouraged to put his argument in terms of those claims which he honestly believes to be true, blunt statements perhaps, but as clear and forthright as possible. Then maybe we can make some progress. Or, at least, we will have a chance.

As a matter of fact, it is not hard to produce a short, clear argument from evil. Consider the following, which uses a premise about our topic for this evening.

> If there were a God, and if He were good, then He would not permit an evil like the Holocaust to occur.
>
> The Holocaust did occur.
>
> Therefore, either there is no God or else He is not good.

That argument is short and clear. Since it uses a premise about the Holocause it might be thought to express the religious significance of that event. And it has the logical virtue of validity. It is also decisive? In my opinion, certainly not.

It may be useful to compare that argument with another.

There is a God who is perfectly good.
The Holocaust occurred.
Therefore, it is not true that, if there were a good God, He would not have allowed the Holocaust.

These two arguments are closely related. They share the premise about the reality of the Holocaust. Each argument has, in addition, a premise which is the denial of the other argument's conclusion. And so, of course, each conclusion is the denial of the other argument's first premise. In these ways the two arguments are, we might say, symmetrical.

Because they are symmetrical in this way, these two arguments also share their logic. If one of them is valid, then so also is the other. Since the first is valid, the second is also valid. And that means that we cannot choose between them on the ground of their logic alone.

It would seem, however, rather awkward to accept both of these arguments. For then we should have to accept two pairs of explicitly contradictory propositions. Though these arguments are symmetrical in several ways they have an important asymmetry. One of them may be sound, but they cannot both be sound. That is, they cannot both have a full set of true premises. It is, of course, obvious that the premise which they share is true. The Holocaust did happen. But the two first premises--these cannot both be true. And therefore the two conclusions cannot both be true.

It looks, therefore, as though we are faced with a choice. Or perhaps it is not so much a choice as a distinction between

two cognitive states in which we might find ourselves. At any rate, we might believe that God would not have allowed the Holocaust, or we might believe that there is a good God. But it would be awkward, to say the least, to believe both. How can we decide between them?

Presumably, a person who puts forward the first of these arguments does believe that God, if He existed and were good, would not have allowed the Holocaust. Perhaps some of us here are inclined to believe it. But why is that proposition to be believed? Is there some good reason to suppose that it is true? Or is it that people believe the first premise of that first argument without any good reason, either by a mistake or just without reason at all?

I myself believe that God could have prevented the Holocaust, had He chosen to do so. But I do not think that it is true that He would have prevented the Holocaust if He were good. Nor can I think of any good reason to suppose that this is true. And a person who does think that it is true might usefully be challenged to try to think of such a rdason himself. His attempt to do that might itself generate an advance in understanding.

The claim that God, if He were good, would have prevented the Holocaust cannot, for example, be defended successfully as a derivation from the more general principle that:

> Any person, insofar as he is good, will prevent every evil which he can prevent.

That principle would indded yield the corresponding claim

about God. Unfortunately, this principle is itself false. We can test it out in many non-theological cases. There are plenty of evils which I could prevent, plenty which you could prevent, and so on. Now, no doubt some of these evils continue because you and I are not perfectly good. If we were better people than in fact we are, then we would prevent or avoid some of those evils. But not all of them. Some of the evils which we allow do not reflect adversely on our morality. We allow them to continue not because of our badness or our lack of power to prevent them, but in spite of our goodness and our power.

Garrett Hardin, a biologist, says somewhere, if I remember correctly, that we can never do just one thing. Though he makes this observation in a somewhat different connection, it is crucial to the point we are here considering. To prevent a given evil would be, considered in abstraction from everything else, a good thing. Considered, that is, as "just one thing" it is the sort of thing which a good person would do if he could. But often, though we can do that thing we cannot do just that one thing. We can prevent that evil only if we also do something else. And that something else may be a cost, a sort of moral cost. That other thing may itself be an evil, or the loss of some great good. And so it may happen that, though we can indeed prevent a certain evil, we can do so only at the cost of making the world worse than it would have been. In such a situation a good person would, I suppose, allow the continuance of some evils which he could prevent.

Considered abstractly, for example, suffering would seem to be an evil, and its prevention would be a good. It may soon be within the power of some single human being, if it is not already, to put an end to all the suffering in the earth simply by destroying the habitability of the earth itself in a series of nuclear blasts. But it is far from clear that the doing of that act, though undoubtedly it would eliminate some evils, would be a good thing.

It is of course true that God, if He is omnipotent as many theologians have thought, can do some things without resort to the means which we find necessary. During World War II, I understand, there was a proposal that the gas chambers in some of the concentration camps should be bombed from the air. But God could, I suppose, have made them inoperative without resort to bombing. And so on through many possible examples. It does not follow from this, however, that God could have done just that one thing. For some things are linked to one another not merely contingently but logically. And those things cannot be separated, not even by God Himself, not even by omnipotence.

For example, God could, I have no doubt, have prevented Hitler from acting. And He could have left Hitler free to act. But He could not both have prevented Hitler from acting and also left him free to act. Neither God nor anyone else could do that. And so it is possible that even God is sometimes faced with a situation in which there is an evil which He could eliminate--an evil whose elimination, abstractly considered, would be a good thing--but which is such that it would not be a good thing for Him to eliminate it. In such a situation the fact that the evil is not eliminated need not reflect adversely

upon God's power, or His goodness, or His reality.

Was the Holocaust a case of this sort? Without a doubt, the Holocaust was something which God could not have prevented as an isolated entity, leaving everything else as it was. If the Holocaust had not happened, then the moral significance of a multitude of lives would have had to be in some way different. The prevention of the Holocaust would have had a cost, even if it had been done by omnipotence. It could not have been done as just one thing.

That does not, of course, show by itself that God should not have prevented it. We should often do things even if they cost something, and so, I suppose, should any moral agent. I can readily imagine someone who thinks that the Holocaust was an immense and terrible evil, and who thinks that the good associated with it, whether of free-will or otherwise, was insufficient to outweigh it. Consequently, he thinks, God should have prevented the Holocaust, and He would have done so if He existed and were good. And so he accepts the main premise of the first argument.

I readily imagine, I say, such a person. But I find in myself no confidence in such a view. It seems to me quite possible that, in such a case, some of the values involved are as yet totally unknown to us, and others are such that we have no ready and reliable way of quantifying them for comparison with each other. And so I am, it seems to me, in no position to base anything upon a claim about what God would have done, or should have done about the Holocaust.

I might, of course, feel a little bad about that. I might wish that I were closer to omniscience. I might wish that I had more knowledge of, and more insight into, the cosmic range of values, and that I had at hand a ready calculus for handling them. But the fact is that I do not, and there is no benefit in building our intellectual lives on the pretence that we are something which in fact we are not.

That is why I take the short clear argument from evil not to be decisive. But of course that argument, or some replacement for it, really belongs to someone on more or less the other side of the fence. Perhaps he will think of another way of putting it, or of another line of support. If that is his inclination, then I for one would encourage him to do so. If he can do that in some illuminating way, then perhaps both of us will be able to see better where we are, and what is the full meaning of both the light and the darkness which, as I said earlier, lie side by side in the Gospel.

There is, too, that other short clear argument which I mentioned, the one which is in many ways, but not all, symmetrical with the first. Its first premise, you remember, is that God exists and He is good. That argument, or something like it figures in the thinking of many believers. They believe that God is somehow justified in allowing the tragedy of the world to continue. But they do not believe it because they somehow see clearly into that justification. No, they believe it because they believe that God is good and loving altogether. Sometime it must be the turn of the critic to ask the believer just what that means and why he believes it. That, too, will be a useful question. It belongs, however, to the beginning of another paper, and not to the end of this one.

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THE PROBLEM OF PROSELYTIZING

An Evangelical Perspective

by

Vernon Grounds

I

For all the radical differences between Judaism and Christianity, these two monotheistic religions share striking similarities. Theirs is a kind of mother-daughter relationship; or, as the apostle Paul puts it in his Letter to the Romans, Christianity is a branch grafted into the olive tree of Israel. Family commonalities ought, therefore, to elicit little surprise. Both faiths venerate the Old Testament as Holy Scripture. Both worship the God of Abraham, Issac, and Jacob. Both believe in a promised Messiah, whether as in the case of Judaism it is still a prospective belief or as with Christianity retrospective. Both subscribe to the same moral principles epitomized in the Ten Commandments; hence both highlight love, justice and personal responsibility. In addition, while once again stressing their vast differences, both religions recognize the duty of bearing witness and making converts.

I, as an evangelical, must speak about Judaism from the perspective of a relatively uninformed outsider, yet there seems little doubt that Jews have traditionally regarded witness as a sacred obligation. In the words of Daniel Polish, the term

> . . . has no cachet in the religious language of the Jews. Its appearance in our conversation is an importation from neighboring territory. In its most elemental sense, redolent, as it is in English, with overtones of legal process, it is, of course, familiar. The Hebrew equivalent of "witness" ed, carries a network

> of associations in its wake. Isaiah 43:10--"'you are my witnesses' says the Lord," sounds a central chord of the Jewish experience. . . .
>
> The witness, in the strictest sense of the term is not simply one who speaks for another. Rather he is one who takes formal oath and gives testimony to some fact concerning the other. Such oath in biblical theology is serious business indeed, with immediate implications for the witness and consequences for future generations. Biblical oaths have a physical component: the witness places his hand under the thigh of the one to whom he is swearing. This is what Eliezer does to Abraham in Genesis 24 as he is about to embark on the mission that will assure his master of the descendants whom he had promised. This graphic act has its counterpart in the Roman practice that provided the etymological root of the English word testify: the witness takes the preliminary oath with his hands clutching his own testes. The implication of these acts underscores the dreadful seriousness of witnessing. To witness is to declare that upon which one would stake, not his good name alone, but something far more serious--the existence of his progeny and their descendants.[1]

Ben Zion Bokser, discussing "Witness and Mission in Judaism" refers to the "profound awareness" in Talmudic literature "that the Jewish people were under a commitment to share the teachings of their faith with the peoples of the outside world." The Rabbis, for example, interpreted the whole career of Abraham as that of a missionary actively "disseminating his faith." Typically they regarded Genesis 12:5, "and Abraham took Sarah his wife . . . and all the persons he had acquired in Haran," as an allusion to the converts won to their God by that faithful patriarch and his wife.[2]

Bokser also writes that during the Graeco-Roman era, Judaism was vigorously evangelistic, waging

> an active missionary campaign to win converts and Godfearers to its banner. In many cases, the missionaries were Jewish traveling merchants who propagated their beliefs among the people with whom they came in contact. We have the evidence of contemporary documents that these efforts were far-reaching.[3]

As evidence of the far-reaching missionary activity of Jews in these centuries, Bokser cites the "gibe at the Pharisees" in Matthew 23:15.

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you compass sea and land to make one proselyte and when he is made, you make him two-fold more the child of hell than yourselves."

Sometimes in their zealous concern Jewish proselytizers would even resort to the strong-arm techniques which equally zealous Christians were later to employ so shamelessly. At least Josepheus records that in the age of the Maccabees, Judaism used force in attempting to convert the Idumeans and Ituraeans.[4]

In the light of this concern with witness and conversion, one can understand why Samuel Sandmel thinks the Christian church spread so rapidly in the Roman world because--among other reasons, to be sure--"its way had been prepared by a Jewish missionary impulse."[5] That impulse was squelched, however, when Constantine in the fourth century forbad Jews to make converts, as Muslim rulers likewise did in the seventh century. But surreptitiously Jewish missionary activity continued.

In medieval Spain, though, a church council decreed death for any Jew who so much as attempted to win over a Christian, and by 1492 Spanish Jews faced one of three dire choices: flee the country, be killed, or profess conversion. No wonder that Judaism lost its missionary spirit. No wonder, either, given persecutions and pogroms, that Jews throughout most of the Christian epoch, have been reluctant to obey Jehovah's directive, "Ye are my witnesses." And yet a modern Jewish philosopher, Herman Cohen, could remind his suffering people that their very suffering was the concomitant of a divine task, that of bearing witness to the world.

> This historical suffering of Israel gives it its historical dignity, its tragic mission, which represents its share in the divine education of mankind. What other solution is there for the discrepancy between Israel's historical mission and its historical fate? There

> is no other solution but the one which the following consideration offers: to suffer for the dissemination of monotheism, as the Jews do, is not a sorrowful fate; the suffering is, rather, its tragic calling, for it proves the heartfelt desire for the conversion of the other peoples, which the faithful people feels.[6]

Recently, moreover, American Jews under the leadership of Rabbi Alexander Schindler and Rabbi Sanford Seltzer--no doubt there are other leaders as well--have been urging that Judaism revert to its ancient practice and seek to bring converts into its fold from among the religiously unaffiliated. Thus in his presidential address to the Board of Trustees of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations on December 2, 1978, Schindler said:

> I believe that it is time for our movement to launch a carefully conceived Outreach Program aimed at all Americans who are unchurched and who are seeking roots in religion. . . . My friends, we Jews possess the water that can slake the thirst, the bread that can sate the great hunger. Let us offer it freely, proudly--for our well-being and for the sake of those who earnestly seek what it is ours to give.[7]

This program, I understand, is low-key but multifaceted, utilizing newspaper ads and articles, books, tracts, filmstrips, and instruction classes. It is, please note, aimed only at the unchurched and religiously unaligned segment of our population. Yet it is a program, according to Rabbi Alan Flan, which is developing "sensible, responsible, intelligent ways to give people an idea of what the options for Jewish life entails." Flan has therefore exhorted his coreligionists, "We should open our arms to the person who is seeking to become a Jew."[8] And perhaps, one surmizes, even stimulate that desire.

As for Christianity, its very genius is evangelism. In Emil Brunner's aphorism, "The church exists by mission as a fire exists by burning," an aphorism which expresses the drive and dynamic of the New Testament.

Let me give a rapid review of some relevant texts. During his ministry, Jesus, as reported by the Fourth Gospel, utters this astonishing claim, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, no man cometh to the Father but by Me" (John 14:6). Then after the resurrection He lays a mandate of universal sweep on his disciples: "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age" (Matthew 28:19-20).

This mandate is repeated at the ascension when Jesus delineates the global dimensions of the church's ministry: "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

In obedience to the Lord's solemn commission, Peter, preaching in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, summons his polyglot audience to conversion: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:38-39). A little later he delivers a second sermon and renews his summons, "Repent and be converted that your sins may be blotted out" (Acts 3:19).

Like Peter, only even more powerfully, Paul after his own dramatic conversion pleads with Jews and Gentiles for a simultaneous renunciation and commitment--a renunciation of whatever religion one formerly professed

and a commitment to the new and solely salvific faith in Jesus Christ. So, explaining his motive and mission to the church at Rome, he declares:

> I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. (Romans 1:14-16)

In that same Letter he exclaims with intense emotion:

> Brethern, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. (Romans 10:1-3)

Writing to a group of Christians in Corinth, Paul defends himself against the allegation of inconsistency:

> For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, that as under the law, I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. (I Corinthians 9:19-22)

And it is Paul who affirms in his Letter to the Galatians:

> But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. (Galatians 1:8-9)

Texts like these--and in the New Testament there are many more--have inspired Christians to become tireless evangelists and missionaries carrying their Message literally to the ends of the earth and indiscriminately viewing every non-converted human being, pagan, Jew, Hindu, Muslim, animist and atheist alike, as a soul for whom the Savior died and with

whom the Good News must be shared. Taken at face value, these texts challenge Rabbi Schindler's opinion that "There is no clear New Testament basis or mandate to justify the efforts to convert Jews." They challenge, too, his assertion that Jews are "outside the need for a Christian form of redemption."[9]

Granted that from the Jewish perspective the issue is by no means as simplistic as I have stated it, what I have stated is incontestably the understanding of the New Testament missionary imperative which has traditionally been held by Christians. Consider, for example, the Bethel Confession, formulated by German Christians during the early stages of Naziism with none other than Dietrich Bonhoeffer as one of its primary authors:

> The Church has received from its Lord the commission to call the Jews to repentance and to baptize those who believe on Jesus Christ to the forgiveness of sins (Matthew 10:5f.; Acts 2:38ff; 3:19-26). A mission to the Jews which for cultural reasons refuses to baptize any more Jews at all is refusing to be obedient to its Lord. The crucified Christ is to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks folly (I Corinthians 1:22f). "The Crucified One" as little accords with the religious ideal of the Jewish soul as it does with the religious ideal of the soul of any other nation. Faith in him cannot be given by flesh and blood even to a Jew, but only by the Father in heaven through his Spirit (Matthew 16:17).[10]

The language is unambiguous. Jews, no less than Aryans, having come to repentance and faith, must be baptized into the Christian Church.

Hence, to sum up the historic belief and practice of Christianity regarding this matter--and American evangelism still adhers to this position--obedience to the crucified and risen Lord demands witness to and, God so disposing, conversion of Jews.

With all of its theological presuppositions and outworkings this position inevitably lays evangelicalism open to the charge of being

intolerably proud and arrogant. Among the accusations leveled against it is that of an insufferable dogmatism. Not content with a humble and genteel relativism, Christianity in its evangelical branch claims to possess Almighty God's fixed and final truth. So Harriet Van Horne, New York Post columnist, praised presidential candidate Jimmy Carter for having "risen above the narrow tenets of his church," but at the same time suggested that "it might be more tactful for Governor Carter to cite the Judeo-Christian ethic rather than attributing all his talk of love and humility to the teachings of Jesus."[11] Indeed, she inquired, "Why should any religious sect consider its view of God the only one?" Or, we might well add, its view of salvation?

And precisely its view of salvation exposes evangelicalism to the charge not only of dogmatism but of exclusivism as well. The sole repository of redemptive truth, it alone--so runs the evangelical claim--holds the key which unlocks the door into a blessed eternity. Its interpretation of who Jesus was and what He did is the one guaranteed way of redemption. Peter asserts this flatly, and evangelicals hold that Peter's words are God's Word: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved (Acts 4:12). And the entail of this exclusivism is according to its critics a shockingly obtuse eletism, voiced ironically in some lines by a bard whom I have been unable to identify:

> We are the Lord's elected few.
> Let all the rest be damned.
> There'll be no room above for you:
> We don't want heaven crammed.

That, I must emphatically protest, is not the spirit of authentic evangelicalism, but it is, I confess, an attitude occasionally displayed by some

Christians.

Still further, evangelicalism is accused of narcissism, a "vulgar group narcissism," to purloin a phrase from John Murray Cuddihy. It is accused, too, of what in Roman Catholic circles was once designated triumphalism or what an early twentieth century fundamentalist, Ford Ottman, called the imperialism of Jesus, a crusading mentality that engenders fanaticism and motivates an aggressive, coercing, high pressure proselytism . . . and might, consequently, in the name of God, be sowing the poisonous seeds of anti-semitism.

Evangelicals like myself are aware of these charges and, while conscientiously thinking through and living out our faith, struggle unremittently to prevent deep conviction from developing into the kind of deadly animosity which stoked the furnaces of Auschwitz.

Not only that. We are compelled to deal with the question which Rabbi Schindler raises. Why do we contend (can we possibly do it without being acrimoniously contentious?) that Jews are not, definitely not, "outside the need for a Christian form of redemption?" Why do we teach and preach that Judaism as a religion fails to qualify Jews as non-candidates for evangelism? That question is being answered in depth and at length as we carry on our dialogue in this conference: we evangelicals are candidly setting forth the answers which we find convincing though they may not prove at all persuasive to our Jewish friends. I assume, then, that it falls within my province as a participant to give a brief answer which I take to be the New Testament answer.

Alienated from God by sinful disobedience, Jews, together with all members of the human family, are lost. But in His unchanging faith-

fulness and fathomless grace God has been redemptively at work in history reconciling the self-estranged race of Adam to Himself. In doing that He long millenia ago challenged Abraham to enter into a unique relationship with Himself and thereby embark on a unique mission. In faith Abraham responded. The subsequent history of Israel issues from the covenant thus established. The Jews, God's chosen people, became the recipients of supernatural truth and an efficatious system of atoning sacrifice. The Israelitish theocracy, however, was simply a framework within which God was providing the possibility of a faith-ful and faithful relationship with Himself duplicating the Abrahamic pattern. From among these people who were Jews ethnically, He was drawing into redemptive fellowship with Himself a people who were Israelites spiritually. Yet He intended that Judaism qua religion be temporary and preparatory, the foundation on which a new faith, a new covenant, and a new relationship would in the fullness of time be established.

Following the New Testament argument, therefore, as elaborated especially in the anonymous Letter to the Hebrews, we evangelicals maintain that by the whole Christ-event Judaism qua religion has been superceded, its propaedeutic purpose accomplished. Since Messiah has come and offered His culminating sacrifice, there is, as we see it, no temple, no priesthood, no altar, no atonement, no forgiveness, no salvation and no eternal hope in Judaism as a religion. Harsh and grating expressions as to its salvific discontinuity are called for--abrogation, displacement, and negation. And those expressions are set down here, I assure you, with some realization of how harsh and grating they must indeed sound to Jewish ears.

Admittedly Christian theologians have disagreed sharply among themselves concerning God's present relationship to His chosen people; and those disagreements persist within the Protestant wing of Christendom. Gerald Anderson, for one, strongly avers that "The covenant in Christ does not displace, cancel, repudiate or annul the covenant with Israel." He avers, rather, that "Christ fulfills and completes the covenant," and in support of his averment he appeals to both a Protestant and a Catholic theologian.

> Emil Brunner emphasizes that the New Testament "radical understanding of doctrine of justification by faith implies . . . not merely continuity with the Old Testament conception of faith as faithful obedience, but at the same time constitutes its completion" . . . Rosemary R. Reuther rightly recognizes that "the most fundamental affirmation of Christian faith is the belief that Jesus was Christ; he was that Messiah whom the prophets 'foretold' and the Jewish world 'awaited.' On this affirmation everything else in Christian theology is built."[12]

Gerald Sloyan sides with Anderson as to the continuity of the unique bond between God and Israel. He concludes his book-length investigation of Paul's text, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness" (Romans 10:4), by declaring:

> To claim that Christianity derives from the Hebrew revelation is to see the election, covenant, promises, and Law of the Jews as permanently valid. No service can be done to God by declaring his work completed by the Christian revelation which has as its result the destruction or negation of the Hebrew revelation. Christ is the end of the Law as its completion, but not as its abrogation.[13]

The contrary thesis of discontinuity goes back, however, to the earliest centuries of the Church. Tertullian, rebutting Marcion's polemic against Christianity as a religion which worships a God Who changes His mind, sees in the very abolition of the Old Testament system a confirmation of Jehovah's faithfulness.

We too claim that the primary epistle against Judaism is that addressed

> to the Galatians. For we receive with open arms all that abolition of the ancient law. The abolition itself derives from the Creator's ordinance. . . . But if the Creator promised that the old things would pass away, because, he said, new things were to arise, and Christ has marked the date of that passing, . . . the apostle . . . invalidates the old things while validating the new, and thus has for his concern the faith of no other God than that Creator under whose authority it was even prophesied that the old things were to pass away. Consequently both the dismantling (destructio) of the law and the establishment of the gospel are on my side of the argument. . . . Therefore the whole intent of this epistle is to teach that departure from the law results from the Creator's ordinance (V,2).[14]

And previously in Book IV of that same work, Adversus Marcionen, Tertullian refuses to concede that the new covenant contradicts the old: it is "different," he writes, "though not contradictory."

> I do admit that there was a different course followed in the old dispensation under the Creator, from that in the new dispensation under Christ. I do not deny a difference in records of things spoken, in precepts for good behavior, and in rules of law, provided that all these differences have reference to one and the same God, that God by whom it is acknowledged that they were ordained and also foretold (IV, 1).[15]

Tertullian can serve as a spokesman for those evangelicals who interpret the new covenant as different from the old covenant yet not a renunciation of its promises--a fulfillment, instead: by faith in the culminating and final Sacrifice, adumbrated and typified by the Hebrew sacrificial system, a believer, whether Jew or Gentile, becomes with Abraham a true Israelite, included within God's redeemed people.

It should be added that evangelicals who embrace a premillenarian eschatology foresee a prophetic future for the Jews as an ethnic entity, with Palestine as the center of Christ's planetary kingdom. But this restoration nationally does not affect the destiny of Jews individually. God's prophetic promises will assuredly be kept; but if a Jew is to experience the Abrahamic relationship to his Creator, it must be through

faith; yes, faith in the Messiah Who has already come, Jesus Christ. In short, as James Parkes, the distinguished Anglican scholar, who was an authority on Jewish-Christian beliefs and a devoted friend of the Old Covenant people, summarized the relationship between these two Biblical faiths, Judaism is "not an alternative scheme of salvation to Christianity, but a different kind of religion."[16] And that is why from the evangelical perspective Jews fail to qualify as non-candidates for evangelism: there is no "alternative scheme of salvation to Christianity."

II

But the traditional position is so offensive that many Christians have been joining with Jews in a determined battle to bring about its modification or, preferably, its abandonment. This battle is going on along three fronts--civility, history, and theology. First, an appeal is made to civility: evangelicalism ought to consider far more seriously the virtue of a kind of henotheistic tolerance. Second, an appeal is made to history: evangelicalism ought to ponder far more deeply the horror of antisemitism. Third, an appeal is made to theology: evangelicalism ought to evaluate far more openmindedly the option of doctrinal reconstruction.

Take, to start with, the appeal to civility. This subject has been brilliantly explored and expounded by John Murray Cuddihy in his sociological study, No Offense: Civil Religion and Protestant Taste. One of the major figures on whom he focuses is Reinhold Niebuhr, the world-renowned Protestant ethicist, long a luminary at Union Theological Seminary in New York City. In an address on "The Relations of Christians and Jews in Western Civilization" which he delivered in 1958 before a joint-meeting of his own faculty and that of the Jewish Theological

Seminary, Niebuhr opted outright for a permanent moratorium on the evangelization of Jews. He endorsed the view proposed by philosopher Franz Rosensweig that Christianity and Judaism are "two religions with one center, worshipping the same God, but with Christianity serving the purpose of carrying the prophetic message to the Gentile world." This, Niebuhr avowed, is a far better view than those conceptions of the two faiths (even, Cuddihy asks, that of the apostle Paul?) "which prompt Christian missionary activity among the Jews." Granted that there are some differences between the two religions. Yet those are really minor, and a Jew can find God "more easily in terms of his own religious heritage than by subjecting himself to the hazards of guilt feelings." Moreover, Christianity is "a faith which, whatever its excellencies, must appear to (the Jew) as a symbol of an oppressive majority culture." Because of ineffacable antisemitic stains, "Practically nothing can purify the symbol of Christ as the image of God in the imagination of the Jew." Such was the essence of Niebuhr's address.

I can do no better service at that point than simply set before you Cuddihy's devastating critique of this block-busting proposal.

> Note, first, how the Children of Light distinction between faith and its "expression" reappears; expression has now become--perhaps under the influence of Tillich--"symbol." Note also that Christian faith seems to exist only in its symbols, viz., "as it appears" to the Jew--"conditioned" (tainted)--or as it appears to the believer, i.e., as bearer of the "unconditioned." The "truth-value" of Christianity "in itself" seems to play no role. Note, further, that Christianity appears, to the Jew, as "culture" (an "oppressive majority" culture); and, further, that--given history--it "must" so appear to him; Jews are not free vis-a-vis Christianity to see it for what-in-itself it really is.
>
> In this attitude of Niebuhr, it may be asked, is there not a stubborn residue of the same condescension to Jews that he is in the very act of disavowing? For Christians, like Niebuhr, are apparently able to understand not only their own Christianity and its true attitude to Jews, but also how Christianity must "look" to

> Jews. Christians, in other words, are able to take the role of Jews to Christianity, whereas Jews, for their part, are, by implication, deemed incapable of reciprocating by taking the role of Christians to themselves. Furthermore, Christians are the only ones who understand this whole process inasmuch as they alone understand that the Jewish lack of understanding is itself "understandable." Further, Jews are expected by Christians to be incapable of finding the Christian position on Jewish conversion "understandable." And, finally, only Christians, it would seem, and not Jews, find this Jewish inability to understand in turn understandable. Note, finally, a curious further implication of Niebuhr's proposal: namely, that even in the (one would have supposed) "privileged" matter of defining one's own religion's relation to another religion, Niebuhr is proposing that that other's "outsider" view of one's own religion--even if erroneous, nay, because it is erroneous--become normative for one's own definition of one's own religion.
>
> The mind boggles!

Little wonder, consequently, that Cuddihy thinks Niebuhr's address might be adjudged "an exercise in expiatory masochism" and even a "sell-out."

Yet the famous ethicist does have reasons, to be sure, for advocating this radical break with Christian tradition. After all, doubt, humility, and toleration on his reckoning are the earmarks of a truly religious person. Certitude, pride, and intolerance are, on the contrary, incompatible with a recognition of the "historical contingency and relativity" which inevitably accompany human finitude, to say nothing about the logic-twisting effects of human sin. In Niebuhr's judgment,

> Our toleration of truths opposed to those which we confess is an expression of the spirit of forgiveness in the realm of culture . . . Like all forgiveness, it is possible only if we are not too sure of our own virtue . . . toleration of others requires broken confidence in the finality of our own truth.

And tolerance is the offspring not of indifferentism but rather of that intellectual modesty exhibited by highminded individuals "with a sufficient degree of humility to live amicably with those who have contradictory opinions."[17]

But these reasons strike Cuddihy as specious. He wonders whether

the root motive for Niebuhr's proposal is civility, a desire to avoid being a Pauline scandal and stumbling block to his numerous intercredal friends. Never once apparently does Niebuhr raise the issue of truth. How tactless to do that! For, as Rabbi Arthur Hertzberg has remarked, "The survival of Judaism in America is endangered by many things; but I believe that it's single greatest enemy is vulgarity."[18]

With all this as background, listen now to Cuddihy's answer to his self-propounded question, "Why, then, was the Christian mission to the Jews abandoned by the Protestants?"--as it has been by sizeable segments of non-Roman Catholic Christianity and a number of influential Roman Catholic theologians.

> Not because Christ and Paul had not commanded it (they had); not because it was false to Christianity (it was of its essence); but because of appearances; it was in bad taste. As Marshall Sklare notes, by 1970 the Jewish community was publicly opposing the Christian mission to the Jews "on the grounds that Reinhold Niebuhr had elaborated a decade before," namely--in Sklare's words--because of "the unseemliness" of such evangelization.[19]

Impressed though I am by Cuddihy's probing study, I incline nevertheless to place more weight than he does on Niebuhr's epistemological skepticism. The inability to apprehend truth with certainty and finality means we can repose only a "broken confidence" in our faith-formulations. Civility and relativism, in other words, are Siamese twins. And why risk social ostracism by insisting that one's friends embrace his dubious surmizes about reality and destiny?

In the second place, the modification (preferably the abandonment) of the traditional Christian assumption that Jews, like the adherents of all other religions, need to accept the Gospel is being urged as an antidote against the recurrent malady of antisemitism. Thus an appeal is

made to history. Ponder, evangelicals are rightly exhorted, the heart-breaking pages of Israel's tragic saga. Realize that it is Christianity which at bottom has been either primarily, or at any rate largely, responsible for the centuries-long persecution that reached its nadir in the Nazis' ghastly "final solution of the Jewish problem." Trace the connection between New Testament anti-Judaism and the anti-Jewish pogroms in Christian (I choose to let the adjective stand without enclosing it in exculpating quotation marks) Europe and America. Do that and you may decide a moratorium on the evangelism of your Jewish friends and neighbors is in order.

Here, frankly, evangelicals are hard put to gain clear perspective. Not regarding the incredible, emotion-numbing insanity of an Auschwitz. Not that by any means! Instead, we are hard put to evaluate objectively the allegation that the preaching of the Gospel has inspired antisemitism and may--God forbid!--do so again in the future. How just, we must interrogate our souls, is that allegation?

The core of the Gospel, we are reminded, is the Cross, the Story of a judicial murder. Perpetrated by the Romans, it was brought about by the hateful connivance of those enemies whom Jesus had stirred up within His own nation. Can this Story be told, we are asked, without eliciting the vindictive taunt (or thought), "Jewish Christ-killers! Jewish Christ-killers!"? Can it be told, as traditionally it has been, and not breed animosity against, say, members of a Brooklyn synagogue who have never heard the names of Annas and Caiaphas? Can it be told and not serve to exonerate the infliction of suffering on the Jews as a penalty merited by their guilt? Recall that at the close of the third

century Chrysostum condemned the "odious assassination" of Christ by the Jews, for whom there is, he declaimed, "no expiation possible, no indulgence, no pardon." Recall, too, that in the twentieth century so noble a Christian as Dietrich Bonhoeffer, challenging the Aryan clauses which Hitler had adopted, wrote this sentence: "The church of Christ has never lost sight of the thought that the 'chosen people,' who nailed the redeemer of the world to a cross, must bear the curse for its action through a long history of suffering."[20] With amplest good reason, therefore, Jules Issac asserts in his Teaching of Contempt, "no idea has been more destructive and has had more deadly effect in the scattered Jewish minorities living in Christian countries than the pernicious view of them as the 'deicide people.'"[21]

Besides believing that Israel as a nation was guilty of murdering its incarnate God, Christians also believe, we are further reminded, that Jewish guilt grows higher and higher as Jesus' own people stubbornly persist in their refusal to accept Him as Messiah. And this is the belief of not merely benighted fundamentalists. No, it is a common Christian belief. Even a theologian of Karl Barth's stature and sensitivity entertained it. In 1957, a long time after Auschwitz, he authorized without change what he had written in 1942, "There is no doubt that Israel hears; how less than ever can it shelter behind the pretext of ignorance and inability to understand. But Israel hears--and does not believe!"[22] And in not penitently acknowledging its Messiah Israel goes on obdurately heaping up its guilt.

Not surprisingly, therefore, history reveals that a dark and destructive attitude towards Jewish people develops as a concomitant of

Gospel proclamation. In the Story of Jesus the sinister villain is Israel: it is the lightning rod that draws to itself the sizzling electricity of Christian wrath.

As evangelicals, what ought to be our response to this indictment? We have, I reply, an inescapable obligation to do whatever we can in order to clear away the misunderstandings and misinterpretations which have dyed the pages of history with Jewish blood. We must point out, for one thing, that the nation Israel as an entity was no more guilty of crucifying Jesus than we were; maybe, in fact, we were more so. Suffice it to say here that a careful examination of the Gospels puts the burden of responsibility for the crucifixion of Jesus on the shoulders of the imperial government in Palestine. So Jules Issac inquires whether the Roman soldiers and their commanding officer were acting on orders from Judas or Caiaphas. "They were acting," he comments, "on orders from Pilate who had sent them." Then Issac comments again, "Common sense tells us that in such cases the greater responsibility lies with those who command the greater power--in other words with Pilate."[23] Hence in refuting the charge that the Jewish people were Christ-killers, we evangelicals must attest with Roy Eckardt that "'Roman responsibility' is a purely historical, superseded matter, while 'Jewish responsibility' is hardly at all a historical matter; it is an existential one."[24] For what Christian today, he asks, would ever shout at a citizen of Rome the taunt, "You killed Christ!"? That would be the nonsensical equivalent of indiscriminately charging a crowd of contemporary Americans, "You killed Abraham Lincoln."

We evangelicals must likewise attest that any Jewish responsibility

was limited to a handful of corrupt leaders and their hangers-on. Eugene Fisher argues that in a way those leaders were not really leaders.

> Cut off from the people and living by collaboration with Rome, the temple priesthood must have developed a quite natural "seige mentality." Eager to please their Roman superiors, they would zealously seek to bring to the attention of Pilate even the slightest hint of rebellion. . . . They were not the truly religious leaders of the day, the Pharisees. Rather the individuals involved were only "the chief priests and the scribes," the Sadducean party of the aristocracy who had sold out to Rome in the view of the people and represented no more than their own selfish interests.[25]

We evangelicals must attest, once more, that since Jesus died for the sin of the world, every human being bears the responsibility for the cross, Christians no less than Jews (and Christians, I repeat, more than Jews). Lest this attestation stir within our deceitful hearts even a flicker of self-righteousness, we evangelicals need to remember that it is actually a belated echo of Article IV of the Catechism of the Council of Trent promulgated in the sixteenth century.

> In this guilt are involved all those who fall frequently into sin; for, as our sins consigned Christ the Lord to the death of the cross, most certainly those who wallow in sin and iniquity crucify to themselves again the Son of God, as far as in them lies, and make a mockery of him. This guilt seems more enormous in us than in the Jews, since according to the testimony of the same apostle: If they had known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory; while we, on the contrary, professing to know him, yet denying him by our actions, seem in some sort to lay violent hands on him (Hebrews 6:6; I Corinthians 2:8).[26]

The recognition of our personal responsibility for the Savior's death is, as James Daane suggests, "the spiritual solvent that ought to dissolve anti-Semitism in the Christian community."

> Penitent for his own role in crucifying the Son of God, cognizant of his infinite guilt for such an act, the Gentile Christian can, within the spirit of true repentance, condemn only himself. When he thinks of the sins of other sinners--which he naturally does and must do--if he is truly sorry for his own sins, he can only compare other sinners favorably with himself. With Paul, he can only say about sinners: "of whom I am chief." Confession of one's

> own responsibility for the death of Christ involves the recognition that one's guilt is infinite. Where this is recognized and acknowledged, how can the sin of another be regarded as greater? How can the Jew be regarded as "most" responsible?[27]

So, we evangelicals must attest that the Gentile refusal of God's Messiah is equally as reprehensible as the rejection of Jesus by a twentieth century Jew, except that, as God knows the conflicting emotions within the labyrinth of every psyche, He is aware, as we cannot be, of the next-to-invincible difficulty a Jew may experience in opening his heart to the claims of a Christ Whose followers have caricatured Him as a cruel sadist rather than a compassionate Saviour.

Consider, in the third place, the appeal to theology as a ground for imposing a moratorium on the evangelization of Jews. For latterly, in the aftermath of Vatical II and with the increase of Jewish-Christian dialogue, not forgetting the continuing effect in the United States of a civil religion that labors to avoid sectarian offense, Catholic and Protestant scholars have pushed for a drastic revision of traditional Christology and pari passu the revision of traditional soteriology. Chief among these has been Rosemary Reuther whose controversial book, Faith and Fratricide, boldly raises this explosive issue, "Is it possible to say 'Jesus is Messiah' without, implicitly or explicitly, saying at the same time 'and the Jews be damned'?"[28] Here it is out of the question--neither is it my specific assignment--to examine her argument that the New Testament is anti-Judaic and thus latently anti-Semitic. Reuther's purpose, as stated by Thomas Indinopulos and Roy Bowen Ward, is to demonstrate that "The anti-Judaic root of Christianity cannot be torn out until the church's Christology is rid of its negation of the ongoing validity of the Jewish faith."[29]

Ignoring her provisional and, even an evangelical may quite dispassionately report, unsuccessful venture at an acceptable non-Judaic reformulation of Christology, let us shift our attention to another Roman Catholic theologian, Gregory Baum, and notice how he has sought to accomplish the same objective. Himself of Jewish background, he too calls for a reconstruction of Christology that will eliminate its pathological anti-Semitism. He is confident that by "ideology critique" the revision can be accomplished. Bravely he blazes the trail which must be hewn out.

> From the beginning, the Church preached the Christian message with an anti-Jewish ideology. When in later centuries, the Church gained political influence and social power, the anti-Jewish ideology translated itself into legal structures that excluded the Jews, with the result that the Christian gospel in fact came to promote the oppression of a living people. Because the enslavement of human beings goes against the spirit and substance of the Gospel, it is possible, I hold to remove these ideological deformations from Christian teaching, however ancient and venerable they may be.[30]

In the soul-scorching blaze of Auschwitz, which serves as "an altogether special sign of the times," Christianity, Baum contends, has no other option than penitent theological reconstructionism. "The Church is now summoned to a radical reformulation of its faith, free of ideological deformation, making God's act in Christ fully and without reserve a message for life rather than death." Speaking his mind more fully and specifically on this score, Baum declares:

> There seems to be no reason why the Christian church, on the basis of the believing response to the Holocaust and a new Christian piety, should not be able to re-think and re-formulate the Christ-event in a way that retains Jesus unalterable as the source of God's judgment and new life for the believing community, but specifies that this dispensation of grace is only a prelude to the complete fulfillment of the messianic promises when God's will be done on earth in the new age.[31]

This, then, in one short sentence is how Baum hopes to engineer the recasting of traditional Christology: "Jesus is the Christ in an

anticipatory way." The Baumian version of Christology

> does not make Jesus the messiah of Israel who fulfills all the divine promises, who completes and closes the order of redemption and who is identified with God in such a way that there is no access to divinity through other dispensations. At the same time, such a christology, to remain in continuity with the Christian past, must clarify the pivotal place which Jesus holds in the history of salvation and the manner in which the absolute manifests itself in Jesus--that is to say, how it remains correct for Christians to say that God is substantially present in Jesus Christ.[32]

This carries a corollary, as Baum unflinchingly admits: Jesus is no longer the way to God, the only Saviour apart from Whom a redemptive relationship with the Creator is impossible. Such exclusivism must be abandoned.

Reuther and Baum have an ally in Father John T. Pawlikowski, O.S.M., professor at the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago and chairman of the NCC Faith and Order Study Group on Israel. He finds fault with Paul's vision of the Jewish future sketched in Romans 9-11 because it "ultimately ends on a conversationist (sic: comversionist?) note that I find unacceptable." So, for him, "More radical surgery is imperative." In his judgment

> parts of our traditional Christology (are) severely inadequate and should in fact be discarded . . . as Christians we should come to view the Jewish "no" to Jesus as a positive contribution to the ultimate salvation of mankind, not as an act of unfaithfulness or haughty blindness.

Pawlikowski is keenly conscious that his reformulated Christology "will profoundly alter Christianity's self-definition," but he is persuaded that it will "make possible a more realistic relationship to Judaism and to all other non-Christian religions."[33]

"A profound alteration of Christianity's self-definition. . . . Profound indeed, so profound that an evangelical must apply to Pawlikowski's

proposed reconstruction the strictures Indinopulos and Ward level against Reuther and, inferentially, Baum. This reformulation has so distanced itself from historic Christian belief that what is presented as "Christological" will not

> prove intelligible, much less acceptable to any of the recognizable branches of Christianity. . . . The implication of our author's Christological "reinterpretation" is that in order for Christology to cease being anti-Semitic, it must cease being recognizable as Christology, that is, "salvific." To us, this appears as self-defeating--a case of stopping the disease by shooting the patient.[34]

Which is why, Indinopulos and Ward warn the ecumenical advocates of reconstructionism, the "inherent contradiction" between the two divergent religions, Christianity and Judaism, cannot be overcome "without either the Chirstian quitting his faith or the Jew converting to Christianity."

III

We come back, then, more or less full circle, to the problem of witness and conversion. Since Christianity, as evangelically construed, is of necessity evangelistic, can Christians earnestly share their faith with Jews and not come under censure for proselytizing? I think they can. As an evangelical, I draw a sharp distinction between proselytizing and witnessing, rejecting proselytism as a perversion of witness. As an evangelical, I am glad to have the Second Vatican Council voice not my mere sentiment but my strong conviction.

> In spreading religious faith . . . everyone ought at all times to refrain from any manner of action which might seem to carry a kind of coercion or a kind of persuasion that would be dishonorable or unworthy, especially when dealing with poor or uneducated people. Such a manner of action would have to be considered an abuse of one's own right and a violation of the right of others.[35]

As an evangelical, I also gladly endorse the editorial note appended to that Vatican II statement.

> It is customary to distinguish between "Christian witness" and proselytism and to condemn the latter. This distinction is made in the text here. Proselytism is a corruption of Christian witness by appealing to hidden forms of coercion or by a style of propaganda unworthy of the gospel. It is not the use but the abuse of religious freedom.[36]

Moreover, as an evangelical, I gladly subscribe to the affirmation made by Tommaso Federici in his study outline for the Roman Catholic Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews.

> The Church thus rejects in a clear way every form of proselytism. This means the exclusion of any sort of witness and preaching which in any way constitutes a physical, moral, psychological or cultural constraint on the Jews, both individuals and communities, such as might in any way destroy or even simply reduce their personal judgment, free will and full autonomy of decision. . . . Also excluded is every sort of judgment expressive of discrimination, contempt or restriction against the Jewish people as such . . . or against their faith, their worship, their general and in particular their religious culture, their past and present history, their existence and its meaning.[37]

In addition, as an evangelical, I gladly countersign the emphatic repudiation of proselytism issued by the WCC:

> Proselytism embraces whatever violates the right of the human person, Christian or non-Christian, to be free from external coercion in religious matters, or whatever, in the proclamation of the Gospel, does not conform to the ways God draws free men to himself in response to his calls to serve in spirit and in truth.[38]

Still further, I, as an evangelical and as a human being who knows his own motives are never unmixed, appreciate James Megivern's helpful analysis in his article, "A Phenomenology of Proselytism." I realize, as he indicates, that three major dynamics seem to underlie the proselytizer's activity: first, the "necessary-for-salvation" motive; second, the "one-and-only-truth" motive; and third, the "obedience-to-a-divine-command" motive.[39]

I realize likewise that operating dynamically in the proselytizer may be latent and "less exalted motives, with consequences that no respectable religion could ever want to justify"--a "domination-motive," an "insecurity-motive," and an "egocentric-motive."[40] But while keenly appreciative of the subtlety and strength of these perhaps unconscious dynamics, I do not draw from them or Megivern's other arguments a warrant for declaring "a moratorium on Christian missions as we have known them."[41] Instead, I am constrained to view positively the three major motives which he mentions. Like my fellow-evangelicals I share the conviction that Christianity, as the flower and fulfillment of its Old Testament root, is the one-and-only truth, the solely salvific religion. Certainly we are not obtusely insensitive to the enormous problems inherent in that conviction. Neither are we obtusely insensitive to the difficulties which our truth-claim creates in intercredal dialogue. Joseph A. Bracken rightly points out that, if a dialogue-partner holds such a conviction, he is not engaging in a mutual search for truth; he is covertly using dialogue "as an instrument to convert the others to one's own antecedent confessional viewpoint."

> If one believes that one already has the truth and that truth of its very nature is incapable of change or development, then clearly one will engage in dialogue only up to a point, the point, mainly, when one's antecedent beliefs would be called into question. . . . Ultimately, one's antecedent views on the nature of truth will dictate the manner of one's participation in a dialogue-situation, and the only honest thing to do in advance of actual participation is to decide where one stands on this prior issue.[42]

Peter Berger is of the same opinion: "Dialogue between Jews and Christians (again, for perfectly understandable reasons) rarely deals with the truth claims of the two communities."[43] So interreligious discussion at this deep epistemological and philosophical level are mandatory

to prevent dialogue from being a polite shadow-boxing. But as long as we evangelicals remain convinced that by God's grace alone, not by virtue of our superior intellectual power, we do in fact possess the Truth and thus know the solely salvific Gospel, we are under obligation to share it. And now Megivern's other motive, obedience to a divine command, comes into play--in our case, obedience to our Lord's mandate, "Preach the Gospel to every living person" (Mark 16:15). Only His mandate and our obedience may have as their motive a dynamic which Megivern does not mention though it is the master-motive in Christian theology, ethic, and mission--love.

"God is love," the New Testament proclaims, and motivated by love and nothing but love He has undertaken the whole process of creation and redemption in order to share the beatitude of His love with finite experients. We hear the Message of that love which at an incalculable cost to Himself God freely offers to all of us. (I read Abraham Heschel's moving exposition of Jehovah's pathos, His empathic identification with humanity and with Israel in particular, and in my heart the Johannine affirmation reverberates, "God is love.") Illuminated by God's Spirit, we respond in faith. And having experienced personally the wonder of His love, we are motivated to love Him and, loving God, obey Him. "If you love me," Jesus said, "keep my commandments" (John 14:15). And one of His commandments is universal evangelism.

More than that, love for the God sacrificially self-revealed in Jesus Christ motivates love for all whom He loves. The inseparable linkage of love-for-God and love-for-neighbor is indicated in these deceptively simple New Testament words:

> We love him because he first loved us. If a man says, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?
>
> And this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God love his brother also. (I John 4:19-21)

And if love motivates us (though its motivating power is confessedly often weak, ineffectual, and short-circuited), we rejoice to share with our neighbors the best we have to give, and that best is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. George A. F. Knight therefore speaks on behalf of all evangelicals when he, a sympathetic friend of Israel, writes: "There is one thing, and only one thing that we must communicate to all men, and that is Christ. To refrain from doing so . . . is a form of religious anti-Semitism which is as basically evil as the philosophy of the Nazis."[44]

Thus in the end the problem is not <u>why</u> but <u>how</u>: as undeserving recipients of redemptive love how can we lovingly share the Gospel with Jewish non-Christians? If we share it prayerfully, graciously, tactfully, honestly, sensitively, and non-coercively, we will not be guilty of the proselytizing that understandably disturbs Rabbi Brickner: "It is not the Gospel that is a threat to the Jews. The threat is from those who use the Gospel as a club to beat others into a brand of belief and submission with which they may disagree or find no need.[45]

Our evangelism, if love-motivated and love-implemented, will fall within the category of witnessing approved by Rabbi Bernard Bamberger: "I see no reason why Christians should not try to convince us of their viewpoint, if they do so decently and courteously; and I believe that we Jews have the same right."[45]

One might devoutly wish that he were a theological genius and a sociological wizard capable of undoing the Gordian knot of Jewish-

Christian relations. But that tangle, I fear, will stay tied until, an evangelist might exclaim, the millenium has dawned. Meanwhile Reuther charts the path which we must follow with a measure of resignation and a capitulation to realism.

> Possibly anti-Judaism is too deeply embedded in the foundations of Christianity to be rooted out entirely without destroying the whole structure. We may have to settle for the sort of ecumenical goodwill that lives with theoretical inconsistency and opts for a modus operandi that assures practical cooperation between Christianity and Judaism.[47]

Is that too modest an agreement? Or can an evangelicalism which intolerantly opposes any least anti-Semitic innuendo, carry on its evangelistic mission while cooperating ecumenically with its Jewish friends and neighbors? My hope, my prayer, is that it can.

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SIN AND ATONEMENT

By Seymour Siegel, Jewish Theological Seminary of America.

"Whatever became of sin?", asks Karl Menninger in a well known book. People, it seems, have stopped talking about sin. This does not mean, of course, that they have stopped sinning. Quite the contrary seems to be the case. One of the wily tricks of the yeser hara, the evil inclination, is to attempt to convince people that it does not exist. Sin is present in our life today as it always has been. What is different is that it has been given new names--sickness, ignorance, weakness--and the seductive label--liberation.

What do we mean when we speak of sin?

In order to answer this question we must describe our notion of what makes up a human being. Anthropology is an indispensible twin of theology.

In this discussion two aspects of human nature are immensely important.

Man is a theological being. He cannot live without some committment to some structure of meaning and value in his life. This structure may be conscious or unconscious--known or unknown. It is revealed most frequently in a period of crisis. When we are faced with difficult decisions or moments of shattering impact we begin to realize what the structure of our values is. To use Paul Tillich's most meaningful formulation: we all have some ultimate concern. There is something, someone, or some cause which is the highest rung of our hierarchy of values: for which we are willing to sacrifice everything. Many things have served as "ultimate concerns": the ego, the state, the party, the pursuit of truth, even the trappings of religion. We are commanded in the Bible: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul and with all thy might. That which a person loves with all his heart, with all his soul and with all his might is his "god." The main choice of life is whether we should serve God or a "god."

The other important aspect of human nature is the assertion that the human is defined by freedom. Freedom is the possibility inherent in the human being of acting one way or another way. The rabbinic psychology posits two yetsers, two inclinations present within the consciousness of the human being. One of these is called the

yetser hatov, which is the tendency within us to turn ourselves to the good; to conquer self-interest and self-centeredness. The yetser hatove makes it possible for us to be obedient to God, to serve others even to the point of self-sacrifice. It is the good yetser that makes it possible for us to practice the good.

The other tendency within us--far more powerful, it seems--is the yetser hara, the evil inclination. This is the tendency within us that propels us away from the good and toward the evil. The yetser hara has its roots in pride and idolatry. In pride we put ourselves in the center of things. Our aggrandizement, our pleasure, our reputations form the core of all our values. This expansion of the ego is at the expense of our true committment--which is to God. The rabbis assert that God says He cannot abide in the same place with the prideful person. There just isn't enough room for both. The other ally of the yetser hara is idolatry. Idolatry consists of substituting something finite, passing, and mortal as our ultimate concern rather than that which ought to be our source of allegiance and total committment. These two tendencies--idolatry and pride turn us away from God; involve us in deeds, thoughts, and committments which are sinful. They turn us away from the good and make us cling to the evil.

Both of the yetsers--the good one and the evil one--are rooted in our freedom. If we had no freedom it would be nonsenical to speak of turning one way or the other way. We would not turn--we would be pushed. If man were completely determined , he might do wrong things--but this would not be sin. The ability to sin is a great tribute to man--for it asserts that he is free. Modern 'liberationists' or determinists (they are not the same) do not aggrandize the human spirit by denying the reality of sin. They diminish the human spirit.

The yetser hara , which turns us toward evil can be identified with sensuality, as hedonism-but it is not, in normative Judaism, identified with the body. The body is not evil. It is, after all, a creation of God. The yetser hara uses the body and its desires to entice men away from the good. The body itself can also be moved by the yetser hatov, the good inclination. This is evident when sexuality or eating is done according to the directives of God. The notion that the body is the source of evil is of hellenistic origin and is not part of normative Judaism. When the yetser hara is overcome , it is a result of the study and practice of Torah and God's grace.

The yetser hara expresses itself also through pride. Whereas in

sensuality, the human being descends to the level of an animal who is at the mercey of his instincts, in pride, the human being pretends that he is more than human, in other words--God. When the serpent tempts Eve in the Garden of Eve to disobey the command not to eat from the Tree of Knowledge, he promises that if does succumb she and her husband will be "like God." This is the eternal temptation of sin. We wish to be like God in making our own law and providing our own salvation and eventually our own immortality. The truth, of course, is that we are amphibious creatures--partly animal and partly spirit. In sensuality we try to forget our spiritual nature and act like animals. In sin as pride we forget our animal dimension and pretend that we are entirely spirit.

The evil yetser, which is the cause of sin, is combatted, as we said above, the study of the Torah and works of lovingkindness. "Blessed are Israel," the Rabbis say" as long as they are devoted to the study of Torah and works of lovingkindness the Evil Yetser is delivered into their hands." (Eccles. Rabba: 9,7) In the rabbinic viewpoint, The Torah by itself is not sufficient to defeat the yetser hara. "The conquest in the end comes from God." (schechter, Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology, p.278). Thus the words of the Daily Prayerbook: "Make us cleave to the Good Yetser and to good deeds; subjugate our Evil Yetser so that it may submit itself to Thee." The underlying idea is "man's consciousness of his helplessness against the powers of temptation, which can only be overcome by the grace of God."(Schechter, op. cit.,p. 280)

Even the yetser hara is not completely evil. It also has its place in the creation. Otherwise God would not have created it. Thus Scripture says: "And God saw everything that He had created and behold it was very good. (Genesis i:31) . This refers, say the Rabbis, to the evil yester. The question is put, "Indeed can the Evil Yetser be considered as very good?" The answer is that were it not for the evil yetser a man would neither build a house, nor marry a wife, nor beget children, nor engage in commerce. The point seems to be that one of the strategies to be used against the evil inclination is to turn it to good purposes. Thus, the desire for acquisition of goods which does reflect sefl-aggrandizement is also the motive power for the economic and commercial progress that characterizes society. Thus life is a continuous battle within the human soul for domination. All too frequently, it is the evil yetser which triumphs.

If the forgoing is true, then the conclusion is that all men sin. Sin may not be "original" in the sense that the term is interpreted

by some Christians . Sin is ubiquitous. There is no man so righteous that he always does good and does not sin. There is a bit of self-aggrandizement even in the highest reaches of the spirit. Men do good not only for the sake of the good--but also to be admired, to be justified, and to be rewarded. The rabbis say that the only commandment which is fulfilled purely is that of circumscion. Thesubject is too young to "sin." However, there is nothing so base that some element of the yetser hatov is not present therein. This is the reason that evil almost always justifies itself in terms of some good. Even our bodily functions have some "spiritual" dimension attached to them. Animals eat when they are hungry. Only human beings are gluttons. Animals have sex only at stated times. Men are lechers. Animals defecate without concern about privacy. Men cover themselves or hide themselves. Even Adolph Hitler, the greatest of all sinners, justified his actions in terms of some higher good: he was after all doing the world a great service in ridding it of "vermin."
It is this mixture of motives that makes human life so ambiguous, so puzzling, so dangerous, and so interesting.

If the above analysis is correct, then individuals can "sin" even when they are not formally religious. If it is true that all men have some "ultimate concern" which functions in life as "god", then all are committed to something. It is also true that they do not fully obey their 'god'. The loyal party member permits himself a bit of self-indulgence; the seeker after power relaxes; the Jew does not fulfill the Torah; the Christian does not fully follow Christ. Though these 'sins' differ in content; they do not differ in form. There is a feeling of alienation, guilt, and remorse. This is part of the human condition. In this sense we all carry the burden of sin.

II.

Let us delve a bit deeper into the motivation for sin. After all, how does the yetser hara succeed so often and so universally? If we acknowledge and commit ourselves to our "ultimate concern", why do we fail so often.

The Hebrew language has three main words to describe sin. These three words are used in the Confession of the High Priest during the service of the Day of Atonement. They, therefore, represent the normative statement about the typology of sin. The three words are: chet, avon, and pesha.

Each one of these terms points to a special quality of sin.

Chet is related to a term taken from archery. It refes to missing the mark--just as an arrow does not hit the bulls-eye. The term refers to the phenomenon of sinning through ignorance, misunderstanding, lack of skill. Frequently, people sin because they have convinced themselves that they are doing the right thing even while they are doing the wrong thing. It also points to the tragic phenomenon of human life t hat frequently our good intentions result in the opposite of what we had hoped. They are not aware that their aim is bad; that their calculations are awry, or that their predictions are all wrong. "The ultimate treason," points out T. S. Eliot, "is to do the wrong thing for the right reason." More harm is done in the name of goodness, love, religion, and justice than in the name of the Devil himself. Parents frequently think that they are doing the best for their children by being indulgent; teachers feel that they are helping their students by not insisting on high standards; governments institute programs to help the downtrodden which increase the misery of those who are the objects of concern. This is one of the really tragic aspects of human existence..It is an expression of sin as reflecting chet. A chet is partially forgiveable--after all, the intention was good. It is also partially blameworthy. Human beings should inform themselves of the probably consequences of their actions. We should attempt to grow in awareness and wisdom so that we have a better chance to fulfill our intentions. In the ancient days, when the sacrificial system was functioning, it was the duty of the doer of a chet to offer a sacrifice called chatat.

Avon is related to a root meaning crooked. It refers to the type of sin which is not a defect of the intelligence, but a defect of the will. The individual knows he is doing wrong. He really wants to do the right, but he cannot help himself. He is overcome with desire, wakness, lack of will. He knows what is good, but he not the power to do the good. The analogy which I find meaningful is that of a dieter who knows that eating ice cream is not good. However, he yields to temptation and exhibits weakness--thus sinning. The doer of the avon is culpable. He should not have submitted to temptation. Most of the sins we commit stem from our weakness, our petty desires and our inability to do the right, even when we know that we are doing the wrong.

The most serious of sins are the result of pesha, rebellion. Sin is rebellion. We know what is wrong. We have the power to resist the wrong. We , however, will to do the wrong

because we wish to assert our own ego; to affirm our own identity. In doing the wrong, in defying God, we affirm our own independence, our own self-confidence. The sin is not merely to gain pleasure or even power over others. It is to defy God in the name of our own autonomy. This is basically the sin of Adam who had everything in the Garden of Eden, except the fruit of one tree. He saw this as a challenge to his own self-hood. He wanted to be like God. I sin--therefore I am.

The pesha sin is the most blameworthy. It is born of rebelliousness and inauthentic self-assertion. It is also the most significant. There is a poignancy, even some nobility (misplaced it is true) in attempting to stand on our own two feet without dependence upon on anything or Anyone. The Rabbi of Kotzk who was one of the great teachers of the chasidim is quoted as saying that he greatly admired Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. He had the stubborness to stick to his guns even in the face of diRE calamities , plagues, and misfortunes. That was a man!, he is reported to have said. This is one of the reasons that great sinners are sometimes converted into great saints. They have directed their remarkable energies, enthusiasms, and courage to the wrong end. They are therefore outrageous sinners..They have but to turn this energy to the good and they will be saints. The talmud says that on a place where a repentant sinner stands, a perfect righteous man cannot stand, Part of this is admiration for the man who has tasted the forbidden fruits of the world and yet abandoned them for the righteous path. However, there is also a recognition that the sinner possesses a fulfsome measure of spiritual energy. During his sinful
fulfs
life he has dedicated these efforts in promoting the evil. In his repentance he has re-directed the same energies toward pious ends. The perpretrator of pesha has spirit; he is rebellious; but he is not passive and pathetic in his sinfulness. He can turn into a saint.

The inner outcomes of sin are alienation and disorder.

Our faith in our ultimate concern makes our human-ness possible. Without this faith men are either the slaves of their impulses or driftless ; they are in a state of anomie. Since sin is an offense against the God we worship, its inevitable outcome is alienation from the very source of our being. We can no longer relate wholeheartedly to the source of Meaning. We have offended Him. We are ashamed and embarrassed. Instead of the encounter--there is concealment. Like Adam in the Garden after he has sinned, the sinner tries to escape God; to flee from Him. Luckily, God continues to pursue us even in our sinfulness. This pursuit is a further cause for the feeling of alienation. Many would like to be rid of God altogether

since His presence does annoy and upset.

The analogy which is frequently used is from interpersonal relations. When we have sinned against someone we love--a spouse, a friend--we feel alienation from the person we love and respect. We cannot look the other in the face. We avoid his company. We cross the street when we see him approaching. Another strategy is to act inauthentically, without enthusiasim or whole-heartedness. The pangs of guilt are a wall which separates us from that we have offended.

The sense of shame comes from the feeling that we have betrayed that which we, literally, hold to be most sacred. There is also a longing to return to authentic relationship. It is this shame and longing which forms the motivation for healing and reconciliation.

Sin also brings with it disorder. The emotional and spiritual life of the individual is affected by his wrongdoing. This may lead to actual illness. Psychiatrists such as Frankl, Menninger, and Binswanger have stressed that exitstential anxiety flowing from a lack of meaning and harmony, shalom, with thesource of life is a basic cause of mental and even physical disorder.

The Psalmist has described the relationship between sin and sickness:

> "Happy is the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is pardoned. When I kept silent concerning my guilt, my bones wore away (keeping silent about transgression--either denying or forgetting that it has taken place, does not lead to happiness but in pain and sleeplessness)

This phenomenon leads to the conclusion that man's essential nature that is, the state of his being that reflects the divine intention, called for fellowship with God in faith and trust. When this fellowship is disrupted as it is in man's existential nature, that is man as he really is, disruption, disharmony and illness results. Rabbi JOseph H. Soloveitchik points out that the experience of sin can have, as we have said, psychological and physical correlates--"anguish, fear, despondency, depression, anxiety' even rashes, dizziness, etc." Rabbi Soloveitchik compares the experience and symptoms of sin and guilt with grief and bereavement, the symptoms of loss. "Both can be seen as the suffering of an intolerable sense of loss, both involve withdrawal, masochism, self-hate and in extreme cases a full array of somatic symptoms."

Lonliness and shame; anguish and guilt, alienation and despair are the fruits of sin. These feelings are frequently distorted, denied, and covered up. But there breaks

through a disgust and revulsion at being in such a state. This is the drive toward repentance.

The Hebrew term for repentance is teshuva. The root means turning, returning, and renouncing. Repentance involves turning, the redicrection of life's energies from the bad to the good. It also involves returning, to the basic nature of our existence, which is to be in fellowship with that which we worship in our ultimate concern. The sinner has strayed far away from his true essence. He is alienated from the source. He must return.

The process of teshuva is intricate and subtle. It involves becoming a new person:

> "Since you have done teshuva it is like you have become a new creature,as it is written ,'and the recrieated nation will praise the Lord.;" (Midrash Tehilim.)...(teshuva equals being born again)

Two authors have written very profoundly about teshuva in our times. One is the German philosopher Max Scheler. His book, On the Eternal in Man. (harper and Brothers) contains a chapter entitled On Repentance and Rebirth. The other writer is Rabbi J.B. Soloveitchik of Yeshiva University, whose annual lectures on repentance delivered during the Ten Days of Teshuva are an annual event in the religious circles of New York. The lectures have recently been published in Hebrew and English by the Iraeli author, Pinchas Peli. Soloveitchik acknowledges his debt to Scheler, contributing many insights from the Judaic pint of view.

Scheler disagrees with those thinkers who seen the notion of repentance as unproductive. These thinkers argue that since repentace deals with past actions, it is self-flagellation to dwell on that which has already happened. Even God cannot change thepast. Since we cannot recover the past, there is no sense in dealing with it.

Scheler argues that though we cannot change the past, we can change the meaning of thepast for us. This change of meaning is part of repentance as the "self-healing ofthe soul."

The meaning ofthe past is never wholly complete. It is always redeemable

through repentance. If guilt brought about by past actions remains unrepented , it has a debilitating effect on the personality. When guilt is acknowledged and repented for, then the effect of the past is radically changed. "Repenting is equivalent to re-appraising part of one's life and shaping it with a mint-new worth and significance." In repentance the situation which resulted in sin is recreated; cleansed and totally reshaped. The meaning of the past is totally different. Think of a reformed alcoholic. The act of drinking his first shot of whiskey is toally different to him now in his reformed situation than it was when he was an alcoholic. Then it was the first of a series of deeds leading to his enslavement. Now it is the first of a series of deeds leading to his liberation. Repentance, therefore, is a process of facing up to past deeds, acknowledging their former sinful significance; expressing disgust and regret at having committed the sin, and the resolutb to be a new man, with a new past, a new present, and a new future. The turning removes the guilt and liberates the person.

Soloveitchik explicates the meaning of tehhuva as it is expressed in the work of the greatest of Jewish philosopher, Moses Maimonides, who included a section on the Law of Teshuva in his masterwork the Strong Hand, or the Mishne Torah.

Maimonides says that the first step in teshuva is confession. An individual must acknowledge his own guilt. He has to tell the truth to himself about himself. This is extraordinarily difficult some times, for, we are, as T. S. Eliot expressed it: creatures who cannot bear too much reality. In Judaic tradition, this confession does not have to be made to a priest--but to God alone. The confessions of the synagogue especially during the Day of Atonement are in the plural so that there can be an inclusion of the individual in the group confession.

The next step is called charata, which means regret. The penitent does not only acknowledge his past sins, he has to regret them--be sorry that he has committed them.

The third step in the process of teshuva is a strong resolve not to repeat the sin. This resolve is tested when the occasion arises again to do the wrongthing, and the penitent resists the temptation.

The final process is reconciliation with God and the rebirth of a new man. This person is a different one than theperson who had sinned. His past and its significance is different. His alienation has been overcome. His estrangement has been bridged. His lonliness for God has been overcome. His human-ness has been restored.

All of this comes through an act of will on thepart of the sinner. Of course, as we saidpreviously, he is helped by God's Grace. But this grace is extended only if the movement toward God has already begun. "He who comes to cleanse himself, "say the Rabbis he is helped from above."

This whole process is one of enormous depth. It is not self-evident nor easy. Solomon Schechter is his classic work, Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology begins his chapter on Foregiveness and Reconciliation with God in the following way:

> The various aspects of the doctrine of atonement and forgiveness as conceived by the Rabbis may be best grouped around the following Rabbinic passage: "They asked Wisdom (Hagiographa), "What is the punishment for the sinner? Wisdom answered, 'Evil pursues the sinners (Prov . 13:21). They asked Prophecy "What is the punishment of the sinner?" Prophecy answered, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die (Ezekiel 18:4). They asked the Torah, "What is the punishment ofthe sinner?" Torah answered, "Let him bring a guilt-offering andit shall be forgiven unto him, as it is said, "And it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him."' (Lev. 1,4). They asked the Holy One Blessed be He, What isthe punishment of the sinner? The Holy One Blessed be He answered, Let him do repentance and it shall be forgiven unto him, as it is said, "good and upright is the Lord:there will he teach sinners in the way (Ps. 25:8.)

It is God Himself who wants the sinners to repent and to return to Him.

Scripture and the rabbinic literature never tire of assuring sinful man of the availability of teshuva and atonement. No life is so derelict, so sin-hardened that it is beyond redemption. Teshuva creates within us a new heart. The self,freed from sin, is open to other people and to a closer relationship with God. Organized around an authentic center, life regains its freedom and wholeness.

The great day of Atonement is the time for repentance and atonement. The verse: "For on this day atonement be made for you, to cleanse you; from all your sins before the Lord shall you be clean.

Rabbi Soloveitchik points out that there are two aspects to the process we have been discussion:atonement (kappara) and purity (tahara)

In the first the stain of sin is removed. The soul is freed from the burden of sin. But this is not sufficient. There must also be purity. The soul must be restored to its original quality as the bridge between the human being and God. Repentance yields kapara, thesin is forgiven and the stain is removed. Yet we do need God's grace to bring us to purity to re-establish our relationship with Him. That is why the verse concludes, Before the Lord Shall ye be Purified. In Judaism it is the Grace of God given freely to him who comes that cleanses and restores. "Fortunate are you, O Israel," say the Rabbis "who purifies you and before whom are you purified? Your father Who is in Heaven." Through Him in direct relationship do we remove thesin and re-establish the relationship.

Jewish mystics (see Sefer Hatanya, Iggeret Hateshuva) point to two kinds of teshuva: the lower teshuva and the higher teshuva. (teshuva tataa and teshuva illah) . In the first, the mercy of God forgives the sins of those who transgressed. The higher teshuva, "the superior form of teshuva, the cleaving of spirit to spirit" requires great effort. It is enough to remove the barrier. The soul must make an effort to re-unite with God, achieving the unity which is so necessary for the realization of God's purpose on earth.

> We are accustomed to thinking of the work of teshuva as beginning after sin, but that until man sins there is ~~no context~~ forrepentance. However, this is not so. All our work is after the sin of Adam..It is thus that all our work has as its purpose to restore the world to that original order and wondrous state.. Thus all our work is the work of teshuva, and if one goes astray and sins, this sin is an addition diminution in the work of teshuva.

This statement made by a contemporary Jewish thinker, summarizes the whole matter. The work of the human being on earth is to return creation back to its Creator; to restore the original rightness with which Creation began. At first, of course, we have to restore our own souls. By doing that we are bringing about the Unity of God and His Creation.

Every year we have Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. The work ofrepentance is never completed. As long as we live we are prey to pride, sensuality, rebellion, self-aggrandizement, separation, and alienation. We fall and stumble--but the opportunity of teshuva remains until the end of days when we will have a new heart and a new spirit. That day has not as yet come. We dare NOT desist from the task of bringing it closer.

JERUSALEM IN BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL TRADITION: A JEWISH PERSPECTIVE

ASHER FINKEL

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"Yeroshalayim: "Qiryah 'Alizah ..." (Isa 22:2)
Dedicated to Aliza, born December 8, 1980, when this paper was completed, and to her mother, my wife Jane.

INTRODUCTION

Jerusalem - Zion occupies a significant place in the Historical, Prophetic and Psalmic works of the Hebrew Bible.[1] After all, the city of God's Temple is the experiential setting of "hagios topos" (holy place) and the spatial configuration of a socio-religious reality for the biblical writers, from the prophets and the psalmists to the redactors and scribes. As such, Jerusalem becomes a powerful literary image in the formation of prophetic thought and in the expression of psalmic prayer. It serves as a symbol, capturing meaning on different levels and it portrays an idea that lends to various parabolic forms. The Hebrew Bible links Jerusalem affectively with basic theological concepts of creation, revelation and salvation. These notions of biblical faith are determined in the highest sense by the human encounter with God's presence in the Temple. For Jerusalem as a cultic place for God's enthronement and manifestation[2] affects deeply the one who prays with a sense of awe and fascination.

Standing before God in the act of humility and dependence is the condition and attitude of the worshipper. Standing implies a "place" orientation; one directs his thoughts and feelings in prayer to God in a place. Through the events of pollution and destruction, purification and restoration, the Temple of Jerusalem produces a setting for biblical prayer, to express lament and

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yearning, to relate despair and joy and to reflect pain and peacefulness. The worshipper relates to God in the direction of the Temple,[3] already reflected in the prayer of Solomon (2 Kgs 8:30) and in the practice of Daniel (6:13). Thus, Jerusalem remains the visible symbol of faith in Jewish prayer throughout the ages.

Likewise, Jerusalem affects the prophets' protest concerning evil, as well as their response to sinfulness and catastrophe. Moreover, it determines the prophetic vision of Messianic renewal and universal redemption. The offshoot of prophecy is apocalypticism,[4] which has shaped significantly the eschatological vision and orientation of both Judaism and Christianity. Clearly Apocalyptic thought is affected by the crisis in Jerusalem and the hope for Zion. Moreover, Jerusalem and Temple emerge on a dual plane as the earthly place of God's indwelling and their counterpart in heaven, the realm of apocalypticist's ascent.[5] This correspondence bespeaks a biblical orientation, that God remains durative and abiding in the religious experience of his transcendental presence while on earth he is manifested in history punctually and elusively. The earthly Jerusalem relates affectively to its heavenly counterpart and they coalesce meaningfully in the end of time, when God's presence will be enjoyed universally.

I. Jerusalem in Rabbinic Thought

The frequent mention of Jerusalem (over 2,000 references) in the Hebrew Bible is noted by the rabbis, and in Midrash Canticles Zuṭa,[6] a list of seventy names, including metaphors and allusions, is given. This betrays a significant hermeneutical approach, analogous to the exegetical method employed by Justin in his Dialogue with Trypho,[7] the rabbi. Justin offers a list of scriptural titles for Jesus, as a Christological guide to the interpretation of the Hebrew Bible. Jerusalem, therefore, is a dominant theological feature in homiletic thought and peroration of the rabbis. This is definitely related to its centrality in the hope and prayer of the synagogal community. For

scriptural preaching was addressed to the liturgically oriented audience, affecting both faith and praxis.

In the above Midrash, the city is linked with the seventy names of God, of Torah and of Israel; similar expressions being interchangeable. This indicates how far Jerusalem has penetrated the theological construct of an organic trilogy,[8] that "God, Torah and Israel are one." Israel's historical consciousness of a continuous relationship with God through Torah, his living words, is determined by a "place" orientation. This effective linkage of God's people with God's place is clearly manifested in the Pentateuch, the authoritative Torah. For Jerusalem and Temple are inextricable and both serve as the quintessence of the Land. The land dominates the Pentateuchal account of salvation in history.[9] Accordingly, the place with Yahweh is central to biblical faith and the Hebrew canon relates the story of God's people with God's land. So it began with the patriarchs and later experienced by their descendants. It is characteristic of the history of the Jewish people to be dynamically related to the human spirit on the move, as M. Buber indicates,[10] from epochs of "Behausung," to be at home in the universe, and epochs of "Hauslosigkeit", to feel homeless and to be regarded problematically.

Place as land, city and Temple is so central a motif to the biblical witness, that in New Testament times, the "place" already coalesced with God's name.[11] Matthew (5:35, 23:21) preserves the teaching of Jesus that Jerusalem is the city of the Great King (Ps 48:3) and the Temple is the place of God's indwelling (Ps 74:2). Neither is to be used in oath taking for this violates the third commandment on not taking God's name in vain. In early Rabbinic period, the "place" (maqom) was used as a divine title and R. Yohanan of the third century indicates (Babylonian Talmud Baba Bathra 75b) that Jerusalem and the Messiah both receive the divine name in prophetic writings (Ezek 48:34

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and Jer 23:6). For the manifestation of God's Kingdom was closely associated in the early Palestinian liturgy with the coming of the Son of David and the restoration of Jerusalem. Such an association dominates also the early Christian liturgy,[12] as recorded in Didache 10:5, 6, and it becomes a distinctive feature in the tradition and redaction of the Gospels.[13]

II Jerusalem in Contemporary Discussion

It is surprising that only in recent times has some attention been paid to the motif, land and Temple, in Biblical theology. This appears to be related, on one hand to a contemporary concern of the industrialized world and its agony of rootlessness, as well with the aspiration of the third world people for a land, which will assure survival and give hope of freedom, as pointed out by W. Brueggemann.[14] On the other hand, the interest in Jewish and Christian circles is also marked by the establishment of the state of Israel and the restoration of Jerusalem. These recent historical events offer a confirmation of biblical hope, when Jews and Christians feel that solidarity with Israel and Jerusalem is an inseparable part of their faith. Yet the contemporary theological discussion seems to be following dogmatic lines. The recent work of W. D. Davies on Gospel and the Land[15] offers a dichotomy of land orientation in Judaism and "disenlandizement" in Christianity, a shift to Christ as the holy place. Such an erudite presentation, which conforms to his line of research, seems to be concerned with the process of Christian departure from Judaism. He further concludes[16] that "Jesus paid little attention to the relationship between God, Israel and the land." Interestingly, Jesus himself is interpreted as being in tension with Judaism. This reminds one of the similar quest in the early part of this century,[17] which came to promote a theologically biased contrast between Jesus and the rabbis to the detriment of the latter. In the case of Jerusalem, the Christian exegetical approach comes either to spiritualize and transcendentalize the city or to see in the

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destruction and restoration of Jerusalem, the prophetic judgment and promise as prelude to Jesus' coming. The Jewish response, as in the earlier work of A. Heschel[18], seems to focus on the significance of time or event in the Bible and Judaism, while space remains secondary. This emphasis on Israel as a people of time goes back to Hegel. One should be cautious with a philosophical interpretation; for in Old Testament thought both time and place are equally important, as is so brilliantly argued by J. Barr.[19]

III New Approaches in Biblical Theology

The theological meaning of Jerusalem-Temple must be judged afresh in light of the recent development in biblical criticism and theological overtures, as well as in light of the sociological, structural and phenomenological investigations.[20] The two major presentations, which dominate biblical studies today, have been challenged. On one hand, these are the results of "Myth and Ritual" research and on the other, there is a Heilsgeschichte interpretation. The latter offers an option that sees theology reflected in the Biblical recital of redemptive events, the Magnalia Dei. The biblical works are presenting a theological historiography which stressed the ideology of covenant.[21] This approach is questioned by S. Terrien,[22] who sees the basic focus of biblical theology is on God's presence.[23] He writes: "The religion of the Hebrews, of Israel, of post exilic Judaism and of early Christians (and the rabbis[24] - my addition) is permeated by the experience, the cultic recollection and the proleptically appropriated expectation of the presence of God in human history."

The covenant is not to be reduced to the form of ancient Near Eastern Suzerain treaty, with its demands on the covenanted vassal people. In contrast, the prophetic thought utilizes matrimonial symbolism[25] to express anthropopathically the dynamic relationship between God and Israel. The eschatological time of covenant renewal corresponds to the historical time of the inital encounter between God and his people. The dynamic religious history of Israel between these two temporal poles, then, reflects the true dialectic of the covenant. It is an interplay of closeness and distance, of excitement and

weariness, of "da'at" (intimate knowledge) and unfaithfulness. The prophets link effectively the remembered past of encounter with the prospect of renewal in the future. The new covenant will be sealed perpetually in the commitments of justice and righteousness, of love and faithfulness. For the city itself and the land provide the place[26] for the collective translation of such commitments, tranforming the society and attracting universal attention, due to a da'at of God. Only then will the transpersonal relationship reflect a mutual declaration like that of nuptial vow: "You are my people" and "you are my God" (Hos 2:21, 22, 25). Thus, the Midrashic interpretation of Canticles, similarly employed by Origen,[27] shares in the prophetic hierogamic understanding.[28] The Midrash views the Temple as the canopy under which Israel meets God in an agapic encounter. This reflects the passionate attitude of the returnees and later the pilgrims in their coming to Jerusalem. It is already expressed in Isa 62:5, "As a young man husbands a young woman, so will your children husband you." The prophet is describing the affective meaning of the promise of return to Jerusalem and the land after the period of Babylonian exile. He links this human response parabolically to God's response in the encounter. "As the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you." Israel and Jerusalem coalese through the experience of encounter. Zion in Rabbinic thought stands for both the place and for the people. God is encountered as in a marital covenant, when the parties experience life together through a "home" setting.

A theology of presence does incorporate the prophetic hermeneutics, itself, whereas the religious phenomenon governing such a collective involvement with the Temple can be examined as a liminal experience.[30] Attention is therefore directed not towards events or acts of God in history but rather to religio-historical processes affecting the worshipping community. They are first reflected in the biblical tradition and then they re-emerge in a dialogue

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with God's presence through scriptures. The recent stress by B. Childs on canonical interpretation[31] properly relates biblical theology itself to the formation of biblical canon. For the initial Midrashic dialogue with scriptures through a community of faith governed by a canonical consciousness reveals the key hermeneutical forms in early biblical theology. Such a development can be traced from Urtext to the Massoretic text through the stages of accepted and received texts,[32] i.e. from Persian time to the New Testament period. Only this approach dynamically compliments the investigation of how the Scriptures were experienced by a liturgical community through reading and preaching, faith and praxis.

This leads us to the second option, that of the history of religion school and its comparative exploration of myth and ritual. Temple is viewed as axis mundi,[33] similar to the Omphalos myth[34] of a central place in mythopoeic thought. Thus, the contemporary theological method seeks to demythologize the earlier religious expression of the biblical writers and instead to offer an existential understanding of faith as it addresses us today. It limits the biblical themes to their mythological frames without recognizing the experiential setting that deepens religious consciousness and ethical behavior. There is a close relationship between the worshipping community and its temple. The Temple was central not only to the cultic but also to the political, economic and social organization of national life. The recent emphasis on sociological interpretation of religions indicates that there is a close link between theological vision and sociological organization.[35]

IV Responses to God's Presence in the Temple

A phenomenological understanding of the basic determinents in a socio-religious setting reveals how the worshipping community relates to God's presence in a place and how it comes to translate a particular religious consciousness. Neither the physical nor the functional reality of Jerusalem

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and Temple exhausts their meaning for Israel. For Temple and Messiah, closely associated in eschatological hope, also were believed to be pre-existent.[36] Both were viewed in relation to God's presence, whose transcendental existence was the foundation of their faith, the theistic faith of Israel maintained that God exists perpetually in a heavenly realm, where he transcends both time and space. On earth, God is encountered in an act of his presence or in the act of his removal (sillug).[37] Such experience is described in connection with the Temple in prophetic (Ezek 8-11) and rabbinic writings. Likewise in the Gospels, the Messiah is depicted in terms of God's presence and his removal. This experiential response to Jesus affects the evangelical vocabulary of movement.[38] Scripture scholarship that does not pay attention to this underlying meaning in redactional theological work fails to recognize the intent of the Gospel writers.

Biblically oriented Judaism always viewed God as the ground of all existence and space itself cannot contain him.[39] Early Christian polemics, usually explained in light of Stephen's speech (Acts 7:48) or John's Gospel (2:21;4:21) could not have misinterpreted this faith position in Judaism. For the biblically oriented community encountered God's presence in the Temple only through its faith in a transcendental reality. Nothing but the Wholly Other can affect the creature's feelings in the event of mysterium tremendum et fascinans (the overwhelming yet fascinating mystery: Rudolf Otto, The Idea of the Holy). In no way was God limited to an earthly place and the statement about the Temple by Jesus and early Christians was similar to the Essence criticism. Both questioned that the polluted Temple of Herod could offer an opportunity for the pilgrims to encounter the Holy. It was criticized as a Temple built by human hands, betraying the intention of human arrogance and self-aggrandizement, antithetical to God's presence. At the same time, both Christians and Essenes as well as the rabbis spoke of a heavenly reality of God's presence envisioned as

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a counterpart to Temple and Jerusalem. It was established as the divine throne before all existence to serve as a divine"pattern" (tabhnit) for its earthly abode.[40]

The Essenes prepared themselves, therefore, for a final cosmic battle which would lead to the restoration of the Temple in its purified glory, as described in the War Scroll. In the interim period, the community in the desert becomes the Temple in waiting.[41] The holy community does not, however, replace the rejected spatial abode, as argued by B. Gärtner[42] and followed by J. Neusner.[43] The Temple Scroll, recently published by Y. Yadin, appears to belong to proto-Essenic time.[44] It offers a blueprint for the ideal Temple in Jerusalem with a fixed liturgical calendar of a solar year determined from Wednesday, the day when the luminaries were created. The Scroll relates:

> "They shall be unto me a people and I will be unto them forever" - the nuptial vow - "I shall dwell among them forever" - the biblical promise of presence. "And I shall sanctify the Temple with my glory" - the earthly Temple sanctified by God's presence. "For I will cause my glory to dwell upon it until the day of blessing (i.e. the end time) when I will create my Temple to be established all the days, according to the covenant I made with Jacob at Beth-El" (29:7-10). This undoubtedly refers to the heavenly Temple as Jacob experienced it in the vision of the Ladder (Gen. 28:10-22).

The early Christian community also viewed themselves as the Temple awaiting the Parousia. They anticipated the ingathering of the dispersed ecclesia to the call of the Shofar and the establishment of the twelve seats of judgment in the presence of the Son of David. All these will occur with the descent of the heavenly Jerusalem.[45] Such eschatology corresponds to the basic hope expression of the eschatological petitions of the Synagogue. However, in the Jewish Christian work of Revelation, this new Jerusalem is

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without a Temple. For "the Lord, God of hosts and the lamb are the Temple" (21:22,22:3). This corresponds to the Markan explanation: "I will raise another Temple that is not made with human hands" (14:58). These depictions come to emphasize that God's presence through Jesus will be the central experience of pilgrims to Jerusalem in the end of time. For long before the days of Jesus, Jerusalem and Temple have been invested with extraordinary significance in the expression of theistic faith. They have a role not only for Israel in history but for the whole world in its ultimate acknowledgement of Gods' reign. J. Jeremias[46] correctly argues that Jesus looked forward to an eschatological pilgrimage of gentiles to the mountain of God in Zion. There they will celebrate the great feast at the redemption of Israel. The gentiles would be guaranteed a share in the revelation vouchsafed to Israel and inclusion in God's redeemed community at the time of Last Judgment.

V Pilgrimage and the Temple

The significance of Jerusalem - Zion for Israel and the early church lies in the pilgrimage event. It is the pilgrimage to the Temple[47] as an encounter with God's presence in his place, which deepened the attachment to the city. Jerusalem became the unique setting for all people from near and far in this dispersion to come together in fellowship before God's presence. It provided the opportunity for the biblically oriented community to experience a covenantal relationship with God. The city demanded a human response of love and compassion, of welcome and hospitality, of brotherhood and common purpose. The early rabbinic tradition[48] preserves accounts and customs[49] of the above responses, which were peculiar to Jerusalem. The rabbis explain one does not come to the city on a pilgrimage in order to enjoy its food or its baths but mainly for the sake of heaven. Jerusalem offered the pilgrims an experiential setting to express their theistic faith and to enjoy a sense of atonement and closeness to God.[50]

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This religious intention is already reflected in the early cultic song and prayer in the Pentateuch. The Song at the Reed Sea (Exod 15:17) and the Deuteronomic Confession of the farmers (Deut 26:9) both relate the redemptive process in history, leading from bondage and threat of annihilation to the entry into the land, for the purpose of "coming to the place" (i.e. "the established abode made by God's hands."[51] Only there will God's Kingdom be proclaimed: "God will reign forever." The early agrarian ritual decalogue (Exod 23:17,18) and the prayer of Solomon (1Kgs 8:29ff) refer to a pilgrimage experience in visiting the Temple in the act of prayer before God's presence. Jerusalem becomes then the focus of the canonical Hebrew Bible. As the Scribes' Midrash of Israelite history, Chronicles is the last item in the list of authoritative books of the Hagiographa (Babylonian Talmud Baba Bathra 14b). It ends with the appeal: "whoever is among you of all his people, may Yahweh his God be with him, let him go up" (2 Chr 36:23), a call to pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Such a stress is canonically introduced at the beginning of the diaries of Ezra-Nehemiah. These became biblical works that relate the effective realization of such an appeal with its impact on the Second Temple period through the renewal of the Covenant in Jerusalem. The Christian canon ends with the Book of Revelation, which describes Jerusalem as the site for universal pilgrimage to a heavenly reality in the end of time. Thus, the city as a center of eschatological hope remained in Judaism also on the earthly plane, whereas in Christianity it was exclusive to the heavenly plane. For Jerusalem holds the prospect from the remembered past, when the community before God was judged, and will be renewed by its setting. Jerusalem does not become simply a site invested with mythological meaning of the Canaanite type[52] with the motifs of a divine mountain, paradisical river and conquest of chaos. The eschatological expectation flows from a present religious reality, that is charged by the historical experience of the past.

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What holds the promise for the biblically oriented community of Jews and Christians is its rootedness in the anamnesis (remembrance) of the ultimate expression of faith in God. Jerusalem was the same site (Gen 22:2 and 2 Chr 3:1) where Abraham displayed his total commitment to God through the sacrifice (Akedah) of his beloved son, Isaac, on Mount Moriah. As such it affected the Jewish appeal of anamnesis in praying for divine atonement. This Midrashic frame in liturgical life was conclusively argued by G. Vermes[53] to have affected the meaning of the crucifixion in Jerusalem of Jesus, the beloved Son, as the atoning sacrifice for the many.

Corresponding to worship is the ethical behavior, which for the pilgrim in Jerusalem in seeking atonement is assumed by walking in the way of Abraham. It is the way of altruistic love which is described as the act of imitatio Dei.[54] Abraham who is chosen to charge his descendants, according to Midrash to Gen 18:19, "teaches them to keep the way of the Lord", i.e. the acts of love, "righteousness", i.e. acts of charity, and "justice". This way (odos = halkhah) was demanded from the pilgrims in Psalms 15 and 24. The way to God's presence in the Temple is paved by the demands of love, righteousness and justice in the realm of interpersonal relationship. Jerusalem captured the ideal social order, which is to serve as the model for the theocratic state based on "Torah, Service and Acts of Love" before its fall and for a theocratic community based on "Justice, Truth and Peace" after its fall, according to Mishnah Abot 1:2 (Simon the Righteous) and 18 (Simon the Patriarch). For such a community the catastrophe that befell Jerusalem was explained as judgment for sins committed towards fellow human beings, the motivational act of ill feeling and the corporal act of blood shedding.[55]

The remnant community, as in the period after the First Temple, redefines its historical role as the people of God due to a pilgrimage consciousness. It judges its relationship with Jerusalem by the past violations of its socio-religious order. Therefore, it pursues in exile its model: temple as synagogue

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and altar as table, while being guided by the rule of "homonia" and "surety,"[56] philanthrophy and Torah life. The return to Jerusalem becomes confirmation of pilgrimage consciousness, which shaped the hope of the oppressed in exile. For the biblically oriented life in Diaspora becomes possible through the annual dramatization of pilgrimage events in Zion with its liturgical calendar. For the holiday periods were collectively celebrated with joy in Jerusalem and they serve the community in exile to re-experience covenant love in God's presence.[57] The synagogal liturgy, therefore, preserves the anamnesis of Zion and its pilgrimage service in the daily prayer and following the prophetic reading, at mealtime and at rites of passage (circumcision, marriage and death), during the holidays and fast days. Thus, the eschatological hope in the restoration of Jerusalem is deeply rooted in the worshipping community that continues to experience exile as a pilgrim on the way back to Zion.

VI The Liminal Experience

Pilgrimage itself is a religious phenomena[58] that charges individual participants through a collective experience in the removal from the secular in order to enter the sacred. This movement involves separation and re-aggregation through the decisive phase of liminality. During this period of transition and transformation, as in the rites of passage, the participants are stripped of status and authority, removed from a social structure maintained and sanctioned by power and force and leveled to a homogenious social state through discipline and ordeal. Pilgrimage promotes comradeship and sense of equality, all are sharing in the awe before God and in the pathos of love. It combines the qualities of lowliness and sacredness, to be charged by God's presence and to be moved by creative feelings. It produces a communitas, which is marked by the absence of property and by simplicity of dress, by the acceptance of suffering and hardship as well as by the elated feeling of joy and celebration.

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The fifteen psalms of "ascents" (120-134) reflect these determinants of liminal experience for the pilgrims. They relate the yearning for peace, the sense of providence, the experience of fellowship, the attitude of humility before God, the purity of intention, the feeling of joy and the blessing of brotherhood. The joy of the pilgrims gathering in Jerusalem, as the ecclesia of Israel (so 11Q Ps, Col 3:9), to offer thanks to the name of God holds the apocalyptic promise for the throne of David and the seats of judgment (Ps 112:5, see Matt 19:28=Luke 22:30). For the liminal stage towards a new world construction is manifested in apocalyptic thought as "between the times" consciousness. It reflects a collective movement towards a historical end and perfection will be obtained in the new order. Apocalypticism 59 offers an alienated protest to the present order and produces in individuals a transforming awareness, which promotes a spirited vitality of life through total commitment to God's justice. Apocalyptic thought sees the human being on a pilgrimage in an earthly plane who arrives in a Temple on a heavenly plane. The visionary experience a journey into the third heaven. In Christian tradition the ministry of Jesus is an earthly pilgrimage to Jerusalem, where he ascends into the heavenly Temple. His followers encounter Jesus in apocalyphic vision as the exalted one in the heavenly Temple. On earth the apostles assume a pilgrim's attitude in taking no gold, no silver and no extra garments but entering towns with the intention of service and peace.

Two movements of post biblical Judaism reflect a deep attachment to Jerusalem even though they had rejected its Temple. They are the Essenes who left for the wilderness of Judea and the nations to prepare the way for return to Zion and they are the early Christians who remained in Jerusalem awaiting the Parousia 60 at the time of the destruction of the Temple. The Essene scroll of Psalms preserves an apostrophe to Zion. In the alphabetical arrangement of the hymn, it relates a love for Zion that bespeaks a love for God ($11QPs^a$).

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"I remember thee for blessing, O Zion; with all my might have I loved thee." This agapic feeling is motivated by a deep hope, a longing for its salvation. So does "the generation of Hasideans" (the Hebrew name for Essenes) express a yearning even in voluntary exile. The same hope expression is associated with the prophetess Anna in the Temple, according to Luke 2:38. Her own widowhood comes to dramatize the fate of the polluted Temple since Pompey's invasion in 63 B.C.E. According to Josephus the historian, it was the decisive event that led to the destruction, which produced also a Pharisaic hymnic response in hope for Davidic Messiah and the restoration of Zion in the Kingdom of God (Psalms of Solomon). Thus, Anna lived almost a jubilee of years in constant vigil of fasting and prayer in the Temple. After its destruction, this was also the practice of the "mourners of Zion."[61] Their constant vigil in mourning for Zion is as if for the death of a beloved person.

The Christian tradition (Matt 23:37-39=Luke 13:34,35), reacting to the same polluted Temple, preserves God's lament for Jerusalem attributed to Jesus. "O Jerusalem, O Jerusalem...how often would I have gathered your children together;" as in time of pilgrimage to the dispersed of Israel "I will be gathered" (see Isa 49:25; 60:9). "As a hen gathers her brood under her wings;" the depiction of a relationship with God's presence through pilgrimage "homonia", which is desired by God (compare Lamentation Rabbati, proem 20 on Ps 102:8), "Behold your house (the Temple) is forsaken and desolate. Therefore I tell you - God is speaking - you will not see me again..." The occasion of pilgrimage provides the opportunity to see and to be seen by God's presence (Exod 23:17, the dual reading "yera'eh", "yir'eh"). "Until you say (the pilgrim's salutation): Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord" (Ps 129:8).

Such is also the love expression and the lament form found in the Rabbinic Midrash to Lamentation, proem 20. The reference to God's lament reflects dramatically the deep pain for the destruction of the Temple, which was coupled

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with a prayerful hope for joy in the return to Jerusalem. The city generated concrete memories of God's presence among people, affecting a relationship in altruistic love. It served therefore the basis for messianic faith, as the Midrash[62] to Ps 43 relates:

"Israel says: Please send to this generation two saviors, like Moses and Aaron. 'Send thy light and thy truth, let them guide and bring me to your holy mountain, to your place of indwelling' (v.3),

"God replies: I will send to you Elijah the prophet, as promised, 'Behold I send Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great awesome day' (Mal 3:23), and the second one (I will send) who is my servant with whom I am well pleased" (Isa 42:1).

The purposed coming of the beloved servant and his forerunner is to bring the community back to Zion. This messianic faith affects the early Christian interpreters of Jesus' historical coming. The evangelical intent is to relate that the universal church is on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem at the time of the heavenly advent of Jesus. The physical city remains a center that generates hope in the biblically oriented community. An authentic Christian theology must then relate such a hope with its messanic understanding. Jerusalem - I mean the city between the walls - must be allowed to link its fate with the people, who long ago and ever since lived and offered to others, those who share in the prophetic faith, a purposeful life because of her. A denial to these people of the Bible, the Jews in Israel today, to translate their existential and historical hope in a return to Zion is also a denial of one's own messianic faith, which is deeply rooted in the biblical notion of pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

# # #

A. Finkel, Jerusalem

NOTES

1. On the historical significance, see S. Talmon, "The Biblical Concept of Jerusalem" in Jerusalem ed. J. Oesterreicher and A. Sinai (New York: John Day, 1974) Ch. 14.

2. On God's presence in the Temple, see S. Terrien, The Elusive Presence (New York: Harper and Row, 1978) Ch. 4. Both the hypothetical enthronement psalms and incubation oracles at the Temple (see L. Sabourin, The Psalms, New York: Abba House, 1970, pp. 117 ff, 217) reflect, however, in post exilic times a religious consciousness affected by God's presence in the Temple. See the forthcoming A. Finkel, Responses to God's Presence and Withdrawal (So. Orange, N.J. Institute of Judeao-Christian Studies, 1981).

3. Mishnah Berakhot 4:5,6 and Tosefta 3:15,16. Such orientation is reflected in the architectural plan of the synagogues excavated in recent times. See H. Shanks, Judaism in Stone (New York: Harper and Row, 1979) p. 51-52.

4. Refer to P. Hanson, The Dawn of Apocalyptic (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975) and see the discussion in D. S. Russell, The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1964).

5. On ascent into the heavenly palaces, see H. Odeberg, 3 Enoch (rep. Ktav: New York, 1973). On the Hekhaloth literature, see G. Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary, 1965) and compare the translations in Understanding Jewish Mysticism by D. Blumenthal. (New York: Ktav, 1978). This apocalyptic theosophical development can be traced back to the Enochic material (see J. T. Milik, The Books of Enoch, Oxford: Clarendon, 1976).

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6. Edited S. Buber, first printed 1984, pp. 2,3 (compare the editions of Schechter and Greenhut). Seventy represents the ultimate expression as in the seventy names of God and Metatron.

7. Chs. 86, 100, referring to King, Christ, Priest, Angel, Rod, Palm, Wisdom, Day, East, Sword, Stone, Jacob, Israel. Listing titles or names is a Midrashic technique, which comes both to facilitate oral transmission and to reflect a particular theology.

8. See M. Kadushin, Organic Thinking (New York: rep. Block) and The Rabbinic Mind (New York: Block, 3 ed., 1972).

9. See W. Brueggemann, The Land (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977).

10. See G. Schaeder, The Hebrew Humanism of Martin Buber (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1973) p. 29.

11. See E. E. Urbach, The Sages (Heb. ed. Jerusalem, 1969) ch. 4 and refer to A. Marmorstein, The Old Rabbinic Doctrine of God (New York: rep Ktav 1968) p. 92.

12. Didache 10:6 still preserves the liturgical seal of "God of David", which was combined with "Builder of Jerusalem" in the early Palestinian recension of petition (so reflected already in Psalms of Soloman 17:21, 22). See G. Alon, Studies in the History of Israel (Heb. ed., Tel Aviv; 1967) Vol I p. 290. A shift occurs in the early Christian liturgy from Temple to Ecclesia in the third blessing after meal. Yet it preserves the theme of ingathering in its holiness", a shift in Greek translation from the Aramaic original: "into its holy place."

13. See D. Juel, Messiah and Temple (Missoula, Mont: Scholars Press, 1977) and Ben F. Meyer, The Aimsof Jesus (London: SCM Press, 1979). Both, however, depict a dichotomy between the Christian and the rabbinic views.

14. The Land, p. 14 and Ch. XII.

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15. The Gospel and the Land : Early Christianity and Jewish Territorial Doctrine, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974. See the critical reviews of D. Flusser in Jerusalem Post Weekly (March 18, 1975) and of L. Frizzell in the Catholic Biblical Quarterly 37 (1975) p. 385f.

16. The Gospel and the Land, p. 365. A similar dichotomy is indicated in his redactional study of Matthew as polemics against Jamnian Judaism, so The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount (Cambridge: University Press, 1966).

17. So were the works of W. Bousett (Jesus und die Rabbiner)of G. Kittel's Theological Dictionary and P. Billerbeck's Kommentar. See the refutation of the latter in H. Odeberg, Pharisaism and Christianity, 1943, usually ignored in the discussion. One must be cautious with a scholarly or theological bias, and works should be devoted to the exploration of common religious settings and phenomena.

18. So The Sabbath (New York: Meridian, 1952). Later in Israel (New York: Noonday, 1967) he reconciles it with the emphasis on space. Compare his God In Search of Man: A Philosophy of Judaism (New York: Harper and Row, 1955), ch 21.

19. Old and New in Interpretation (London: SCM Press, 1966), pp. 65ff.

20. On biblical theology, see James D. Smart, The Past, Present and Future of Biblical Theology (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1979). Refer to Brevard S. Childs, Biblical Theology in Crisis (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1970) and to his major evaluation of the canonical interpretation in Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979). On the sociological interpretation, see Robin Scroggs, "The Sociological Interpretation of the New Testament," New Testament Studies 26 (1980) pp 164-179. On the structuralist approach refer to D. Patte, What is Structual Exegesis? (Philadelphia Fortress, 1976). The approach is instructive with reference to a deep reading of the text ——————→ (reflecting models, paradigms, examplars ——————————→

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and value systems) rather than a binary reading with its archetypal understanding, which eliminates the concrete setting and its particular faith configuration from consideration. A phenomenological approach has been indicated in theworks of M. Eliade and V. Turner.

21. See D. J. McCarthy, Old Testament Covenant (Atlanta: John Knox, 1972) and refer to R. Bultmann, History and Eschatology (New York: Harper, 1957) a biblical historiography. See also O. Cullmann, Salvation in History (London: SCM Press, 1967).

22. The Elusive Presence, Ch 1.

23. Ibid., p. 28. The Phenomenon is to be contrasted with the mythopoeic account (See T. Mann, Divine Presence nad Guidance in Israelite Traditions, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1977).

24. See M. Kadushin, Worship and Ethics (New York: Block, 1963) Ch 7.

25. See A. Neher, The Prophetic Existence (New York: Barnes and Co., 1969) Part 3, 2. Refer also to A. Finkel, "The Jewish Liturgy of Marriage" SIDIC (Rome) 14 (1981).

26. The Tannaitic Tradition and Josephus record customs and practices associated in particular with Jerusalem, as the hospitable setting for pilgrims. See J. Jeremias, Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus (Philadelphia:Fortress, 1962) but consult further S. Safrai's study of "Pilgrimage in Second Temple Period" (Heb. ed. Tel Aviv; Am Hassefer, 1965) and in compendium Rerum Judaicarum ad N.T. Section 1, Vol II: The Jewish People in the First Century (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976) Ch 17. On the legislation and the land, consult Brueggemann's The Land and Davis' The Gospel and the Land.

27. See Marvin H. Pope, Song of Songs (Anchor Bible: Doubleday, 1977) pp 89ff.

28. "Appiryon"(palanquin) or the marital canopy of Cant 3:9 is so interpreted in the Targum, Canticles Rabba and compare Pesiqtas on "Beyom Kaloth Mosheh." The Tabernacle and the Temple are both symbolic of the cosmos and God's throne in this Midrashic interpretation. The Wedding day of Cant 3:11 is interpreted similarly with reference to the erection of the Tabernacle and

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the building of the Temple. See above works and Mishnah Ta'anith 4:8 (compare Midrash Canticle Zuta).

29. See both Pesiqtas on Haftarta de Nehamtha; the references to Zion are understood as Israel.

30. See the study of V. Turner and E. Turner, Image and Pilgrimage in Christ and Culture (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978) Consult appendex A.

31. Refer to forthcoming publication of Bernhard Anderson's presidential address on "Tradition and Scripture in the Community of Faith" at SBL Centennial, 1980 (to be published Journal of Biblical Literature, 1981).

32. See the presidential address of James A. Sanders, "Text and Cannon: Concepts and Method" (SBL annual meeting 1978) in Journal of Biblical Literature, 97 (1979).

33. So M. Eliade, The Sacred and the Profane (N.Y.:Harper, 1957) ch. 2 p.

34. See. S. Terrien, "The Omphalos Myth and Hebrew Religion," Vetus Testamentum 20 (1970) p 315-338.

35. See John G. Gager, Kingdom and Community (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1975) on the sociological meaning of the Kingdom of God. As for the Old Testament time of the Israelite amphictyony see the recent study of Norman K. Gottwald, The Tribes of Yahweh (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1979).

36. "Six things precede the creation of the world: Torah, Heavenly Throne, Temple (see Targum to Jer 17:12), Patriarchs, Israel and the Messiah." Genesis Rabba 1:1, ed. Theodor-Albeck, p. 6 and notes.

37. Refer to A. Finkel, Responses to God's Presence and Withdrawal.

38. So. J. D. Crossan, "Empty Tomb and Absent Lord" in The Passion in Mark ed. W. H. Kelber (Philadelphia:Fortress, 1976).

39. Genesis Rabba 68,9 and Midrash Hagadol to Gen 28:11, ed. Margolioth p. 498 notes.

40. On the heavenly model and its cosmic signifance see L. Ginzberg, Legends of the Jews (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1954) Vol III

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151, 153, Vol IV 67. Note that the Tabernacle is constructed according to the Divine plan (Exod. 36-38 in accordance ——————→ with 25-27). So Solomon's Temple is constructed in accordance with the Divine plan (I Kgs 6,7 in accordance with 2 Chr 28: 11-19). See further A. Aptowitzer, Bet Hamiqdas šel maʿalah. in Tarbiz 2, pp 137-153, 257-287.

41. See G. Klinzing, Die Umdeutung des Kultus in der Qumrangemeinde und im Neuen Testament (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1971) and refer to L. Frizzell's dissertation, The People of God: a Study of the Relevant Concepts in the Qumran Scrolls (Oxford, 1974).

42. The Temple and the Community in Qumran and the New Testament (Cambridge: University Press, 1965).

43. "Judaism in a Time of Crisis" in Judaism 21 (1972) p. 318. See Y. Yadin's criticism in Temple Scroll (Jerusalem, 1977) Vol I p. 144 notes.

44. Consult A. Finkel, "God's Presence and the Temple Scroll" in God and His Temple ed. L. Frizzell (So. Orange, N.J.: Institute of Judaeo-Christian Studies, 1981).

45. The Ingathering of the elect (the ecclesia) in Mark 13:27; Matt 24:31 (at the blast of the Shofar) and Didache 10:5. The Seats of judgement in Matt 19:28; Luke 22:30 (at the messianic banquet). Both are associated with the appearance of Son of Man in his Kingdom (Luke) or on his glorious throne (Matt), ~~associated~~ which relate symbolically ~~with~~ to the heavenly Temple and Jerusalem.

46. New Testament Theology (New York: Scribner's, 1971) Ch. 21, 3 and compare his Jesus' Promise to the Nations (Studies in Biblical Theology 24, London: SCM Press, 1967).

47. The purpose of pilgrimage is "to be seen and to see" God's Presence. So is the dual reading of Yir'eh-Yera'eh in Exod 23:17 (Mekhilta Simeon ad loc. and Sifre Deut, 143. Moriah (place of oracle) is called by Abraham "Adonai Yir'eh-Yera'eh" (Gen 22:14). On pilgrimage refer to n. 26 and include M. Haran, Temples and Temple Service in Ancient Israel (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978) Ch. 16.

48. Refer to Babylonian Talmud Baba Bathra 93b, Sanhedrin 23a; 30 a and Semahoth 12. See A. Guttmann, Jerusalem in Tannaitic Law (HUCA, 40-41, 1969-70) and G. Cohen, Zion in Rabbinic Literature in Zion in Jewish Literature ed A. S. Halkin (New York: Herzl Press, 1961).

49. Babylonian Talmud Pesahim 8 b.

50. See Midrash Ps 48:1 and Numbers Rabba 21, 19.

51. The reign of God is established on God's holy mountain, so Zech 14. The ultimate hope expression in Jewish daily prayer is the return of God's presence to Zion; see the formulation by the early Hasideans, Midrash Samuel 31; Midrash Psalms 17 and the Palestinian recension of Amidah.

52. See the review of J.J. M.Roberts, "Zion" in Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, Supplementary Volume (Nashville: Abingdon, 1976).

53. Scripture and Tradition (Leiden: Brill, 1973). See also S. Spiegel, The Last Trial (New York: Beheman, 1979).

54. Genesis Rabba 49, 19 (ed. Theodor-Albeck p. 502 notes) See also Midrash Hagadol to Gen 18:19.

55. Such is the view of the Deuteronomist (2 Kgs 21:16) and the later rabbinic explanation of fraternal animosity (Babylonian Talmud Yoma 9 b). Shedding blood in Jerusalem causes the disruption of Temple rituals (Tosefta Sotah 14:1.

56. The theme "homonia" (Agudah) is developed in Midrash Samuel 5:15 (Simeon ben Yohai as condition for the Kingdom) Compare Sifre Deut 33:5 (on Yahad) and Leviticus Rabba 30, 12 See also Lamentation Rabbati proems 20, 29. The theme of "surety" (Arebhim) is indicated in Babylonian Talmud Shebhuot 39 a and see Palestinian Talmud Hagigah 3, 6 (habherim).

57. See. W. D. Davies, Gospel and the Land p. 67ff and M. S. Chertoff, "Jerusalem in Jewish Consciousness" in Jerusalem ed. Oesterrecher-Sinai.

58. Refer to V. Turner, Image and Pilgrimage.

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59. See P. Hanson, "Apocalypticism" in Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, Supplementary Volume.

60. Edited J. A. Sanders (Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University, 1967) pp 123-127.

61. See Babylonian Talmud Baba Bathra 60b, Ta'anit 30b and Derekh Ereş Rabba 2.

62. Midrash Psalms ed. S. Buber, p. 267 (Compare W. Braude's translation of Midrash Psalms, Ps. 43).