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Address of Rabbi Alexander Schindler
At The FRJ Dinner
In Honor of Barbara Iselin



April 29, 1993
Albany, New York

Thank you all for coming here this night. It is gracious of you to do so, to lend us your strength. In return, I can give you the assurance that the cause which your presence advances is exceedingly worthwhile.

As for the woman we delight to honor tonight, Barbara Iselin, what can I possibly tell you about her that you do not know so much better yourselves. All of you are here because you know her and love her. Your relationship spans the decades. It has been cemented by tears of joy and sorrow alike.

I too count myself in the companionship of those who hold her dear. And this is precisely why words do not come easy for me this night, for you see, it is easier by far to speak of a stranger, but Barbara is no stranger to me. She is my friend, and I too feel the warmth of her constant care.

How fitting it is that Barbara's tribute is held right here in this place, Congregation Beth Emeth of Albany. After all, this is the matrix from which she sprang. This synagogue was her spiritual womb.

I speak now of something more than institutional identification. I speak rather of her commitments, of her deep-rooted beliefs. She is a daughter of the synagogue in the sense that her actions are motivated largely by the awareness of her Jewishness and its demands. Judaism is her vital force. It is the source that gives her life its vitality and essential direction.

She is a fifth generation member of Congregation Beth Emeth and she served and led this congregation as Board member the better part of her adult life, ever adding to its inner beauty and its outer strength.

No absentee landlord she, nor is Alan for that matter. When they are in town they are in Temple every Friday night.

Nor did she ever choose the easiest means of serving this and other institutions of human love. She chose rather that most burdensome and yet quintessential of all institutional tasks: she raised money, most recently as the Co-Chair of this Temple's Capital Campaign. She scratched and scraped together those material means without which spiritual ends simply cannot be served.

She comes by this attribute quite naturally, I suppose. After all, her parents ranked among this community's leading philanthropists and she but followed their example. I am glad that her mother, Edith, is with us here tonight. . . How proud she must be to see how well Barbara internalized those values which she and her late husband, Neil, strove to instill in her.

Barbara certainly internalized their understanding that Jewishness demands service to the Jewish people as a whole, - - witness, if you will her leadership of the UJA's Women's campaign - - and that, further Jewishness ever demands that we seek the well being of the larger community in whose midst we dwell. Barbara responds to this summons too, does she not? You already heard from Tom Whalen and Pat Swygert. They spoke of the many communal institutions on which Barbara lavishes her great care: Albany's Public Library, its Medical Center, St. Margaret's and the NY State Institute for Arts in Education . . .

In a word she is a proud and loyal daughter of her people, in the fullest meaning of that term, and it is altogether fitting and proper that a synagogue and its movement pause to accord her honor.

As you can imagine, my friends, in the course of my life of public service I have spoken words of tribute to a great many people, but I know no one who is more worthy of acclaim than is she. Barbara is an altogether remarkable human being. I speak now not primarily of her outer attainments to which I already alluded to some extent. I speak now rather of the inner person, of those rich gifts of heart and spirit with which she is endowed and which enabled her to achieve what she did and to be what she is.

She is blessed with a questing mind. Few matters are beyond her interest. She is always eager to nourish her own literacy, her own understanding of matters.

She also has a well-refined sense of the beautiful, of the harmonious fitness of things. Look at her home, which she designed with attention to the smallest detail. Its lines are clean. Everything is well-proportioned, just so, in perfect balance. It is a place in which the spirit is uplifted.

She certainly is energetic and determined. Once she has her mind fixed on a course, she is relentless in its pursuit; there is no deflecting or checking her. When something has to be done, she does it at once. The word 'procrastination' is simply not in her vocabulary. Gail tells me that Barbara had her children's summer camp trunks ready for shipping no later than Lincoln's Birthday, by mid-February. And when Gail told her son, Max, that she despaired of getting his trunk ready in time for the start of camp, and exclaimed, "whatever will I do?, I'll never manage," seven year old Max advised her, "just call grandma . . . she'll get it done."

Yes, Barbara gets things done, and with attention to the minutest detail. She never forgets an occasion, and what a blessing that

is. For you see, I'm inclined to forget my wife's birthdays and our anniversaries. But Barbara never forgets. Her carefully chosen greeting cards arrive at least two days before the event, and so she has saved my hide on more than one occasion.

But I admire this above all: her mettle, her pluck, her spunk, her steady courage in adversity. She takes everything in her stride. She never talks of her own hurts or her own fears. She gives heart to everyone else, but when others express concern for her, she replies with a quiet strength: "I don't need anything. . . don't worry about me . . . I'm fine." There is one gutsy lady, and nothing in all the world is as admirable as is a dauntless spirit.

At the very core of Barbara's being there is a caring for others. She is essentially good and kind. There certainly is no more faithful a friend than is she. Once she embraces you as such, she shuns no pain to be of help, to stand at your side.

Understandably, Barbara cares most for those who are closest to her: the members of her extended family. She loves her children and their mates, with an abounding love. She glories in their attainments. She is fiercely loyal to them, like a lioness protecting her cubs. As for their children, her grandchildren, they are the very jewels of her crown.

And of course, she loves Alan, the companion of her life and soul these many years. Together they walk the way of life, drinking from its one cup, when it runs bitter, when it runs sweet, giving true meaning to the words: husband, wife, and marriage.

In so many ways, then, Barbara is Reform Judaism's image ideal . . . She represents us at our best, as we aspire to be, exemplifying the kind of activism and commitment that exalt our religious community. This is why we do well to honor her.

But we honor her best, not by giving her an award, but rather by supporting that cause that has been central to her life of public service: the nurturing of our people's spiritual being, the sustaining of the synagogue, the strengthening of its supportive institutions.

This is the source that gives her life its vitality, its essential direction. This is also the source that ever sustained our people, so the great Hebrew poet, Bialik, reminds us in words most beautiful to hear: "im vesh et nafsh'cha lodaat," he wrote . . . "if thou wouldst know . . . "

"If thou wouldst know the mystic fount
from whence thy forebears drew the strength and fortitude
to meet grim death with joy and bare the neck
to every sharpened blade and lifted axe, or pyres ascending
saintlike die with shema visrael on their lips.

"If thou wouldst know the mystic fount
from whence they wretched brethren drew in evil days
divine condolence, patience, fealty,
and iron strength to bear relentless toil
with shoulders stooped to bear a loathsome life
and endlessly to suffer and endure.

"If thou wouldst know the mother merciful
who saved her lost sons tears with tenderness
and steadied lovingly his faltering steps.

"If thou wouldst know O humble brother mine,
go to the House of Study, the House of Prayer . . .
Thy heart will tell thee then
that thy feet tread the marge of our life fount
that thine eyes view the treasure of our soul."

As it was in the past, so it is today, and will be for tomorrow.
The synagogue is the magic ingredient of our people's wondrous
endurance.

The synagogue quite simply is the heartland of Judaism. All
other Jewish institutions use Jews - - the Federations, the
Defense Agencies, the AIPACs - - they all mobilize and utilize

Jews in behalf of the community. But only the synagogue creates Jews. It is in the synagogue where the individual soul and the community are joined. It is in the synagogue where modernity and eternity cross-fertilize, where the seeds of the Jewish future are sown. It is in the synagogue where the covenant is recreated and renewed in every generation.

We do well, then, to strengthen the synagogue and its supportive institutions. And in doing so, we render Barbara our finest tribute more meaningful to her, surely, than this Medal which I give her now. It is but a symbol and sign of our regard and affection for her. Come forward, then, Barbara, it's time for you to take central stage and receive those plaudits which are your just due.



UAHC KEEPER OF THE FLAME AWARD

TO

MATTHEW H. ROSS

AMERICAN JEWISH
ARCHIVES

ADDRESS BY

RABBI ALEXANDER M. SCHINDLER



Nashville, Tennessee

May 22, 1993

I rise to perform an altogether pleasant task, and that is to present the Keeper of the Flame award to the Honorary Chairman of our Board, Matthew Ross.

You will recall that the Union conceived this award as a means of fulfilling the foremost mandate of our faith which bids us to transmit its values.

Orthodox Judaism, as we know, has the written text as the primary source of its authority. Tradition dictates, and it is the task of the individual to heed its summons. Reform Judaism rejects this notion and has made autonomy its hallmark, granting individuals considerable license in the religious life. They are called upon to interact with tradition, but tradition is given only a vote but not a veto. Lacking a revealed text backed by the force of divine authority, Reform is compelled to rely essentially on the persuasive powers of teachers to transmit Judaism's message.

But teachers teach better by example than they do by precept. Our recently appointed Director of Reform Judaism's Commission on Education made this very point to our Officers two nights ago, when he projected the master-disciple relationship as the paradigm, the desired pattern of our educative endeavors. Students, he said, internalize their values primarily by identification with the ego ideal, that is to say, they follow the teacher who is rather than the teacher who only persuades with his lips.

bar b'varzel yachad - iron sharpeneth iron.

A knife can best be honed against the edge of another knife.

The words of MISHLE, of the Book of Proverbs, are re-echoed in

the familiar words of Ralph Waldo Emerson:

"He who teaches as books enable only babbles . . . not any profane man, not any liar, not any slave can teach . . . but only he can give who has, he only can create who is . . . courage, wisdom, piety, love, they can teach."

It is for this very reason, that the Board of Trustees of our Union of American Hebrew Congregations resolved to choose each year one individual from our vast and vibrant constituency; a man or a woman whom we could hold up as our image ideal, whose commitment to Reform Judaism, the Jewish people, and the community-at-large exemplifies our highest values.

This selection is not easy to make. Many are worthy, but only one can be chosen each year. Indeed, Matt is only the fourth in our history - - which now spans more than a century - - to be thus selected. But the choice cannot be challenged, for his life assuredly embodies those ideas and ideals to which we ascribe the name of our faith.

Matt's gifts of the intellect are extraordinary. And Judaism - - no less Reform than any of its other streams - - has always placed a premium on the human mind and its capacity to reason. Matt's mind is keen, razor sharp in its ability to reason. Moreover, it is a constantly questing mind, eager to learn, to absorb the new, to grow in knowledge and in understanding. He is also an exceedingly kind person, courteous, considerate, compassionate, respectful of every human being no matter what his station or state. I never heard him raise his voice in anger. He is always willing to listen, to understand the other point of view, and having done so, to reconcile divergent positions and to find their common ground. These qualities combined, a discerning mind and a feeling heart, made him the superb and successful lawyer as well as leader of our movement that he was and is.

As a Union of Congregations, we honor him essentially for his life long devotion to the synagogue and its supportive institutions - - The Union, the College-Institute, the Conference, the World Union for Progressive Judaism.

His Jewishness was given its shape at Central Synagogue and under the tutelage of its late, great Rabbi Jonah B. Wise. It is a Jewishness in the classical mold, not as demonstrative as is more common nowadays, but no less pious, no less devout. It fused Torah with Derech Eretz; ever insisting that Jewish learning be bonded with dignity. He loves that Temple, Central Synagogue. He glories in its past and ceaselessly strives to secure its future - doing everything he humanly can to add to its outer strength and inner beauty. His peerless years of service and leadership were properly acknowledged when he was chosen President of that historic congregation, a congregation whose building was dedicated by Isaac Mayer Wise.

Now an inspiriting force as strong as is Matt's needed an even wider arena for expression, and he found it when he became active in the UAHC and ultimately was chosen as its head. He served us in every conceivable capacity. Wherever there was a need, he responded with alacrity and zest. For a score years, he, as Chairman of our Law Committee, helped us with our multitudinous legal problems, spent countless hours, which in their accumulation, added up to many months of painstaking labor, all pro bono, without a farthing of recompense.

He was Chairman of our Assembly Resolutions Committee during some of our most tumultuous debates. Indeed, I first encountered him at the San Francisco Biennial in 1965, when the Union was the first Jewish organization to speak out against our country's misadventure in Vietnam. And it was his quiet leadership which enabled us to achieve one of our finest hours.

He was elected to highest office in 1974 on the death of Harry Guttman, alav hashalom, and served as our foremost leader for an unprecedented five and a half years.

His leadership of America's Reform movement was intelligent and forceful. He was not as massive and tall in stature as some of his successors - - you have to be over six feet nowadays and built like a football player to make it as Chairman - - but once he ascended the rostrum he was in full command. Then he towered over the tumultuous masses like a giant, that giant of the spirit that he was and is. And of course he looks every inch the chairman, handsome with his shock of white hair, and his elegant bearing, his countenance mirroring his inner excellence to a "t."

Now I don't mean to suggest that Matt is entirely without flaw or failing. To begin with, his memory for names is cloudy. This is not just a failing which came with the passing years, it was there from the very beginning. His children learned to accept his inability to remember their names, ever calling Allan, Jane and Jane, Allan. I didn't mind when he introduced me as Max or Charlie, as he did on several occasions. But I confess that I did wince when he introduced Yitzchak Shamir before a distinguished audience and the rolling cameras with the words:

"I am pleased to present to you, Prime Minister, ah, Arik Sharon."

But that's not his only flaw. He is something of a male chauvinist, although this particular imperfection is made bearable by the fact that he readily admits it. When I prepared my remarks for Mildred's accession to the Presidency of Central Synagogue and asked Matt what I could say about her, he quickly replied:

"The nicest thing that you can say about Mildred is that she has put up with me for nearly 50 years - - and you have to be nice for that!"

This unexpected burst of self-recognition hits the mark. it can't have been easy putting up with Matt these many years. That took patience and consummate understanding, but it also filled Mildred with pride and justly so, for Matt's considerable achievements were fully hers as well. She stood by his side always, supporting him full heartedly in whatever he undertook to do, so much so that the two were always seen as one.

What else can I say excepting this - and I am certain that all the other Chairman, past and present, and their spouses agree - Matt and Mildred Ross will always be known and admired and loved as Reform Judaism's first couple.

You have led us with dignity. You have taught us much throughout your long and creative life, and even in these your later days. You show us how to defy the passing years. You instruct us that growing old is a bad habit which a busy man has no time to form. You teach us that nobody grows old merely by living a number of years. That people grow old only when they give up their idealism and their hope.

You prove to us that while the passing years may wrinkle the face, only cynicism can wrinkle the soul. Your face is still smooth and above all, so is your soul.

Keep it that way, Matt, at least for another two score years. Come forward then, Matt, and receive that honor which you truly merit.

In Honor of Matthew Ross
Nashville, Tennessee
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Keep it that way, Matt,

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Come forward then, Matt, ~~and you too Mildred,~~

and receive that honor which you truly merit.



November 6, 1993

With heavy hearts we gather here this day to bid farewell to a friend, to take our final leave of Oscar Janowsky, who meant so very much to all of us. When he walked in and out among us we were filled with gladness. His voice always rang true and strong and we rejoiced. But now our laughter has turned to tears, our joy to a bitter sorrow, for his voice is stilled and his luminescent eyes are closed forever.

To be sure now, Oscar Janowsky lived a long and full life. He was granted more than the four-score years that Scripture apportions to the strong. Nor did advancing age ravage him as it does so many others; he was alert of mind and spirit to the very end. Still, his dying is not easy to accept, is it? He was such a precious human being. The feeling persists that he had much more to give and we to receive. And so we mourn and stand bereft.

I count myself in this companionship of sorrow, for I do more today than give voice to the complaints of others. Professor Janowsky was my teacher and in many ways my inspiration. I, too, will miss his presence and feel the want of his care.

Oscar Isaiah Janowsky was truly one of the gedole hador, one of the giants of our generation.

Preeminent historian and scholar, he became this country's leading expert on European minorities and imperialism as well as in Jewish studies. He authored ten major books on these and kindred subjects, wrote countless articles and lectures which were read and heard world-wide. They were well received, but more to the point, they had a decisive impact on policy.

For forty years - - from 1924 to 1966 - - he served on the faculty of CCNY. Those were the heyday years of that noted institution, its golden years. He was the College's full and tenured Professor of History and also Director of its School of Graduate Studies, a post he assumed with the goal of providing graduate training to students who could not afford to go on to private institutions. The disadvantaged were always on his mind and in his heart and he was determined to respond to their need.

It is as a teacher that I knew Oscar Janowsky best, and what a remarkable mentor he was, a master of his craft and of a kind you encounter but rarely in life, and how fortunate you are when you do. He preferred class discussion to lecturing and always stimulated his students to react critically to what they read - - to evaluate and to interpret.

He spoke softly. There was always a twinkle in his eyes and a soft smile playing about his lips. Nonetheless, there was a sternness within him, an insistence on the highest possible standards of scholarship. Class discussion had to reflect knowledge and a detailed familiarity with the sources. He did not abide the kind of self-expression which rests on hearsay and headlines, always favoring the hard-working student over those glib pupils who were adept only in catch phrases and sweeping generalizations.

As only the rarest of teachers are, he was always accessible, eager to help his students, not just in academic matters but with their personal problems too. Perhaps, most important of all, he was what he wanted his pupils to be. Thus teaching us not just by precept, but by example. As a teacher - - and parent, for that matter - - he embodied the lesson inherent in Emerson's dictum:

"that he who teaches as books enable only babbles . . . not any profane man, not any liar, not any slave can teach but only he can give who has, he only can create who is, courage, wisdom, piety, love . . . only they can teach."

Oscar Janowsky possessed those qualities, and in abundant measure. This is why he will always be remembered as one of the great teachers of our generation.

But his work was not bounded by the walls of the classroom. He rendered wide-ranging public service as well - - in academia and in the larger world.

He was a member of the Shotwell Commission and drafted its report on National Minorities. For years, he served on the Committee on Human Rights of the UNA-USA. And, most notably, he was principal advisor to the League of Nation's High Commissioner for Refugees in the 1930's. Indeed, Dr. Janowsky prepared MacDonald's scathing letter of resignation when the latter left his post to protest Germany's treatment of its minorities, notably Jews, and the world's failure to provide refuge for political exiles during those fearsome years.

Dr. Janowsky was born in Poland, and came here at an early age. He often told his children that when he entered the American Public School system he walked from the Old World Judaism of a previous century, into the freedoms and opportunities of the new world. He loved this blessed land, America, and ever strove to repay its gifts. But he never neglected his roots either. He valued the rich gifts of our tradition as well, and his love for the Jewish people and its culture was as great as was his love for this land.

He rendered magnificent service to America's Jewish community. Several of his seminal studies - - most notably of the National Jewish Welfare Board and of Jewish Education in the United States - - helped give direction to our communal striving and must be credited for the strength which we eventually attained. Indeed, one of the phrases which he coined became immortal, when he called Jewish education in the United States "a mile wide and an inch deep."

During the post World War II years, there wasn't an agency of worth in the American Jewish community which did not turn to him for help, and he never refused it. The Joint Distribution Committee, YIVO, B'nai B'rith, Hadassah, the American Association for Jewish Education, Brandeis University, the American Jewish Historical Society, you name it - - they all received his concerned and caring counsel. He became, in effect, American Jewry's most precious resource, its leading Advisor.

World Jewry also turned to him for help, and received it. He was a member of the Board of Jerusalem's Hebrew University, served on several of its key committees and organized its implementation for twelve years. Little wonder that he was the recipient of scores of citations and medals and awards and Honorary Doctorates - - that I will not even specify lest I exclude.

Yes, so many of Dr. Janowsky's actions were motivated by the awareness of his Jewishness and its demands. Judaism was his vital force. It was the source that gave his life its aliveness and essential direction.

His strong ethical bent attests to that too. The mildness of his human approach notwithstanding, there was a moral fiber within

him which was unyielding in its tenacity. He never compromised his principles either to please a friend or to appease an enemy. Thus, he resigned from one Education survey and refused to sign its report because its sponsors did not provide the promised means required to draw responsible conclusions. As another case in point, when he visited Jerusalem in 1935, he received a limousine delivered vellum invitation to dine with the High Commissioner and promptly refused it because he opposed the anti-Jewish policies of the British Mandate.

Yes, his ethical sensitivities were a reflection of his Jewishness and so was the compassion that stirred within him and which he saw as emanating from the deepest well-springs of his faith. Witness his life long concern for the down trodden, the disadvantaged, minorities, Jews. He was a man who cared.

Obviously, the greatest measure of Oscar Janowsky's care was given to those who stood closest to him: his daughters, Sylvia and Tamar, his son Melvin, and their spouses. He loved them with an abounding love, stood by them in moments of their greatest pain and gloried in their attainments.

As for his seven grand children, and now even four great grand children, ken virbu, they were the very jewels of his crown. Once when visiting their sabba's summer home, his grandsons, then age 2 and 6 respectively, opened a lemonade stand and took pride in the fact that they had earned \$3.62. It was only many years thereafter that they learned that their grandfather had distributed nickels and dimes to neighborhood children to induce and enable them to buy that lemonade.

During his lifetime he was fortunate enough to win the love of two lovely women. The first, Pauline, the beautiful mother of

his children, whose life he shared for over sixty years, who supported him and for whom he cared with devotion, especially during those years of her final illness. Oscar's latter years were made more meaningful and happy by his second life, Lillian, also beautiful in countenance and deed, kind to him as he was ever kind to her.

He died as he lived . . . at his desk, in his study, near his files. He was ever the matmid, the consummate student and scholar, an exemplar of Judaism's highest ideals - - until his final breath was drawn.

And now he is no more, and because he was what he was and is no more, we weep, weep because a bright and shining star has been torn from the firmament of our lives, and our lives are the darker because of it.

Yet his memory can brighten our way as he did throughout his life. He always taught us so very much . He taught us even in his latter years which he met with so much wisdom and grace.

Then he taught us that growing old is a bad habit which a busy man has no time to form; that nobody grows old merely by living a number of years; that people grow old only when they give up their idealism and their hope. He taught us that whilst the passing years may wrinkle a man's face, only cynicism and alienation can wrinkle his soul.

Oscar Isaiah Janowsky's face was smooth til the very end and so was his soul.

T'hi nishmato tsrurah butzror hachayim

may his soul ever be bound up in the bond of everlasting life.

Amen.

SCHWARTZ

Oscar I. Janowsky Eulogy, November 6, 1993

Sadie -
They will
want
eyes -
Please have
Union
retype

With heavy hearts we gather here this day
to bid farewell to a friend,
to take our final leave of Oscar Janowsky
who meant so very much to all of us.

When he walked in and out among us we were filled with gladness.
His voice always rang true and strong and we rejoiced.
But now our laughter has turned to tears, our joy to a bitter sorrow,
for his voice is stilled
and his luminescent eyes are closed forever.

To be sure now, Oscar Janowsky lived a long and full life.
He was granted more than the four-score years that Scripture
apportions to the strong.
Nor did advancing age ravage him as it does so many others;
he was alert of mind and spirit to the very end.
Still, his dying is not easy to accept, is it?
He was such a precious human being.
The feeling persists that he had much more to give and we to receive.
And so we mourn and stand bereft.

I count myself in this companionship of sorrow,
for I do more today than give voice to the complaints of others.
Prof. Janowsky was my teacher and in many ways my inspiration
I too will miss his presence and feel the want of his care.

Oscar Isaiah Janowsky was truly one of the gedole hador,
one of the giants of our generation.

R Preeminent historian and scholar

he became this country's leading expert on European minorities
and imperialism as well as in Jewish studies.

He authored ten major books on these and kindred subjects,
wrote countless articles and lectures
which were read and heard world-wide.

They were well received,

but more to the point, they had a decisive impact on policy.

R For forty years -- from 1924 to 1966 --

he served on the faculty of CCNY.

Those were the heyday^{years} of that noted institution, its golden years.

He was the college's full and tenured Professor of history
and also Director of its School of Graduate Studies
a post he assumed with the goal of providing graduate training
to students who could not afford to go on to private institutions.
The disadvantaged were always on his mind and in his heart
and he was determined to respond to their need.

R It is as a teacher that I knew Oscar Janowsky best
and what a remarkable mentor he was,
a master of his craft and of a kind you encounter but rarely in
life, and how fortunate you are when you do.

He preferred class discussion to lecturing
and always stimulated his students to react critically to what
they read -- to evaluate and to interpret.

R He spoke softly.

There was always a twinkle in his eyes
and a soft smile playing about his lips.

Nonetheless, there was a sternness within him,

an insistence on the highest possible standards of scholarship. Class discussion had to reflect knowledge and a detailed familiarity with the sources.

He did not abide the kind of self-expression which rests on hearsay and headlines, always favoring the hard-working student over those glib pupils who were adept only in catch-phrases and sweeping generalizations.

P As only the rarest of teachers are, he was always accessible, eager to help his students, not just in academic matters but with their personal problems too. Perhaps, most important of all, he was what he wanted his pupils to be thus teaching us not just by precept but by example.

As a teacher -- and parent, for that matter --

he embodied the lesson inherent in Emerson's dictum

"that he who teaches as books enable only babbles... not any profane man, not any liar, not any slave can teach... but only he can give who has, he only can create who is, courage, wisdom, piety, love...only they can teach."

Oscar Janowsky possessed those qualities, and in abundant measure. This is why he will always be remembered as one of the great teachers of our generation.

P But his work was not bounded by the walls of the classroom. He rendered wide-ranging public service as well -- in academia and in the larger world.

P He was a member of the Shotwell Commission and drafted its report on National Minorities

For years, he served on the Committee on Human Rights of the UNA-USA. And, most notably, he was principal advisor to the League of Nation's High Commissioner for Refugees in the 1930s.

Indeed, Dr. Janowsky prepared Mac Donald's scathing letter of resignation when the latter left his post to protest Germany's treatment of its minorities, notably Jews, and the world's failure to provide refuge for political exiles during those fearsome years.

Dr. Janowsky was born in Poland, and came here at an early age. He often told his children that when he entered the American Public School system he walked from the Old World Judaism of a previous century, into the freedoms and opportunities of the new world. He loved this blessed land, America, and ever strove to repay its gifts. But he never neglected his roots either. He valued the rich gifts of our tradition as well, and his love for the Jewish people and its culture was as great as was his love for this land.

He rendered magnificent service to America's Jewish community. Several of his seminal studies

-- most notably of the National Jewish Welfare Board and of Jewish Education in the United States -- helped give direction to our communal striving and must be credited for the strength which we eventually attained.

Indeed, one of the phrases which he coined became immortal, when he called Jewish education in the United States "a mile wide and an inch deep."

P During the post World War II years, there wasn't an agency of worth in the American Jewish community which did not turn to him for help, and he never refused it.

The Joint, YIVO, B'Nai B'rith, Hadassah, the American Association for Jewish Education, Brandeis University, the American Jewish Historical Society, you name it

-- they all received his concerned and caring counsel.

He became, in effect, American Jewry's most precious resource, its leading Advisor.

PP World Jewry also turned to him for help, and received it.

He was a member of the Board of Jerusalem's Hebrew University, served on several of its key committees and organized its Program for Overseas students, safeguarding its implementation for twelve years.

Little wonder that he was the recipient of scores of citations and medals and awards and Honorary Doctorates -- that I will not even specify lest I exclude.

PP Yes, so many of Dr. Janowsky's actions were motivated by the awareness of his Jewishness and its demands.

Judaism was his vital force.

It was the source that gave his life its aliveness and essential direction.

PP His strong ethical bent attests to that too.

The mildness of his human approach notwithstanding, there was a moral fiber within him which was unyielding in its tenacity.

He never compromised his principles either to please a friend
or to appease an enemy.

Thus he resigned from one Education survey and refused to sign its
report because its sponsors did not provide the promised means
required to draw responsible conclusions.

As another case in point,

when he visited Jerusalem in 1935,

he received a limousine delivered vellum invitation to dine
with the High Commissioner

and promptly refused it because he opposed the anti-Jewish
policies of the British Mandate.

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Amen.

Yechezkel Yeshayahu ben Aharon...

ADDRESS BY RABBI ALEXANDER M. SCHINDLER

KOL-ISCHA

AMERICAN JEWISH
ARCHIVES



Leo Baeck Temple
Los Angeles, California
June 8, 1993

Thank you Lenny, for your kind if overly extravagant introduction. I am deeply grateful to you, even as I reciprocate your sentiments of regard and affection with a full heart. Len Thal is a remarkable rabbi, a remarkably able regional director, industrious, caring, effective. He is responsible for everything good that happens in this region, and we all have reason to be beholden to him.

Come to think of it, though, I may just have been a bit overly extravagant in my own praise. Len is not responsible for everything good that happens here. As a case in point, a good many people labored zestfully to make this evening be and I am grateful to them all. None worked so assiduously on this program than did that fearsome foursome team of Chairpeople: Jean and Jay Abarbanel and Mark and Peachy Levy . . . without whom this event would never have happened, nor without Janet Marder, for that matter, who does so much so well all in an unassuming manner and whose inspired conception this splendid function was.

This is a glorious occasion - as we mark the 20th Anniversary of Sally Priesand's ordination and with it celebrate the manifold and priceless contributions which women have made in every realm of our religious community's life. The empowerment of women within Reform Judaism was not an act of noblesse oblige by any manner or means. It was a gift to ourselves - - an endowment from which the dividends of renewal and rejuvenation have not ceased to flow.

In many ways, Sally's ordination was a revelatory experience for us all. I don't mean this in the theological sense of the word revelation, but rather in its more everyday meaning as a revealed

truth. A truth that once absorbed seems obvious, a truth that renders past ideas irredeemably flawed, a truth that makes change imperative, a truth so obvious that when it brands us, we are forever changed and can no longer revert to obsolete frames of reference that held us in thrall but yesteryear.

Sally's ordination, was such a revelation, for with it two thousand years of exclusivist assumptions collapsed. With well over 300 women now serving in the rabbinate, with many times more serving as cantors and educators, as mohalot and administrators, it now seems obvious, oh-so-obvious that women can and should serve in every realm of the religious life.

To be sure now, it would be disingenuous for me to suggest that this revelation in Jewish life is a fait accompli: that the sexist practices of the past have shuffled off their mortal coil and have ceased to be . . . they have not! As Evelyn Shlensky so forcefully reminded us, the old assumptions abide. They have not vanished from bodily sight. Old stereotypes don't fade that fast. They persist.

They persist in the ongoing reluctance of certain large congregations to interview women rabbis for senior posts. They persist in the salary inequities between male and female rabbis that plague our movement; and in the rare tenuring of ordained women as faculty at HUC-JIR and in the sparsity of women rabbis as UAHC Regional Directors. They persist, alas, in the incidences of sexual harassment and sexual condescension that undermine the very institutions of the rabbinate and cantorate and our seminary. Among too many of us, it seems, gender equality is but a slogan, and not a reality. It is a facade erected to camouflage structural flaws which require rather extensive and rigorous repair.

As President of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, I want to make it clear that I am not here to score political points with our listeners, - - among them my daughter of whose entry into the rabbinate I am exceedingly proud. I am here, rather, and in full partnership with our lay leaders, to help propel the force of change within Reform Jewish life, through resolutions, through public and private agitation, through dialogue and through affirmative action. So much of the progress that I have helped to translate into institutional reality over the past two decades in the realm of Outreach, of gay and lesbian integration, of spiritual renewal and numeric growth - - all of them have direct ties to feminist inclusion. In a word, my convictions on this score are deeply rooted.

To be sure, now, there are times when I feel disoriented by all these transformations. After all, I was born of a different age, and so there are times when the unfamiliar land of the feminist community bewilders me and I inadvertently stumble back into more habitual tracks of thought and speech. But in the realm of policy, I have always stood and will continue to stand firmly as an ally of our pioneering Jewish women.

But having said all that, let me confess that I do feel discomfited by those who have portrayed the rabbinate in its all-male days as universally hierarchical, power oriented, unconcerned with intimacy - - as if these competitive instincts were the exclusive function of maleness, of testosterone, of some original defect that we can trace to Adam.

They are not. There were and are entirely too many exceptions to test the rule. Many male rabbis are models of change within the system. Many male rabbis are compassionate and caring. Many male rabbis seek community and not power in their congregations and careers, and they did so long before the first woman rabbi was ever ordained.

Nor is it true that the Ordination and Investiture of women is a total rupture with the Jewish past, that women's liberation has no roots whatsoever in the patriarchal, hierarchical system of the Jewish tradition. The reality of Judaism is rather more complex. It offers many contradictions, so Blu Greenberg reminds us, and at every turn of our religious literature these variances "virtually leap off" its hallowed pages where we can encounter sentiments "of equality and hierarchy, respect and condescension, deference and disability, compassion and callousness" toward women. Thus we find two stories of human creation, one steeped in the spirit of equality, the other in a spirit of subordination. We find two contradictory strains of rabbinic teaching, one viewing women as a vessel, the other viewing women as so spiritually elevated that they can call down the very rain of heaven to water the parched earth. And we find in Judaism men with tears in their eyes, and women with tent pegs and swords brandished in their hands.

Nevertheless, even at its best, tradition speaks of women largely in relation to men, rarely in relation to God, more rarely in relation to self or to other women. Even at its best, the tradition speaks about women, only occasionally to women, and until recently, never b'kol isha in the voices of women.

"Now for the first time, opportunities have arisen for women to join in the conversation," writes Rachel Adler. Herein lies the transformative impact of our 20-year-old revelation on Jewish life: the voices of women are heard in the synagogue, they have been included in the conversation. But what, more precisely, has this "joining in the conversation" meant for Judaism?

Well, to begin with, exclusion has been terminated, and exclusion had its costs. For those excluded, the cost was the stunting of ambition and self esteem, the donning of spiritual girdles, the disorientation that results when the quiet messages of the heart

are being drowned out of the blaring messages of disempowerment. Exclusion had its costs even for those who were not excluded, for it forced us as male rabbis to embrace a narrow definition of self-hood lest we slip into the realm of the "other," and we felt compelled to prove our manhood daily, sometimes by superhuman exertion, to show that we are worthy to retain our privileged status.

By "joining in the conversation" our pioneering women have ended exclusion and established inclusiveness as the new order of Jewish life. Inclusiveness permits the female experience of life-giving and motherhood to be a part of synagogue life and thus allowed the image of our God as nurturing Mother to find enthronement in our minds. Inclusiveness encourages the building of circles rather than towers to be our goal and our greatest achievement - - the concentric circles of community in which God and Torah are at the very center. Inclusiveness strengthens the "authority" of the rabbinate by loving kindness.

By "joining in the conversation," our women rabbis and cantors and educators have also enlarged our understanding of Judaism. They bring insights unique to women in their approach to our classical texts and thereby they enable us to grasp a more complete, a more fully authentic Judaism. Indeed, it is the women of Israel who first embraced the Torah - - so we are taught. It is the women of Israel who withheld their gold from the idolaters who built the Golden Calf. And had only one woman been missing from the foot of Mt. Sinai, so Shimon bar Yochai instructed us, the Revelation of the Ten Commandments would have been withheld from us all.

In sum, then, our pioneering women professionals have been no less than midwives to the rebirth of Judaism in our lifetimes. They enable us all to stand again at Sinai. They have enlarged

the tabernacle of Judaism, and with the expansion of our community has come the expansion of our souls. Like Puah and Shifrah, they have blended storm and sunshine, innovation and tradition to redeem Judaism from the ever-looming walls of Mitzrayim, the narrow place, to help us all travel anew to holy ground.

We have good reason, then, to mark this anniversary and rejoice. Good reason, also, to be grateful to the many who made it possible:

To the leaders of our great seminary, the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion who opened its doors to women and prepared them so well for their taxing tasks.

To the many lay leaders of our Union of Congregations - - men and women both - - who paved their way, whose spadework and ongoing support have been behind whatever we can boast of as achievement.

And above all, to our honorees, the women clergy, themselves, who endured the teasing, the demeaning, the insulting that accompanied their journeys, are we grateful. Their dedication to Judaism is a worthy chapter of our long history of pride in the face of persecution, of strength in adversity. They are the true inheritors of that which makes Reform Judaism a living, breathing faith.

And we owe thanks to God who brought us here as allies, as beneficiaries, as witnesses.

B'RUCHA AT SHECHINAH CHEY HA-OLAMEEM.

Blessed is God . . .

You let us hear the truth . . .

You move us beyond constricting limitations . . .

You empower our people with strength . . .

You crown the House of Israel with beauty . . .

AMEN

#1
P
Leo Baeck Tople

Kol-Ischa | Los Angeles, Ca.
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FRJ DINNER IN HONOR OF DAVID GOULD

BY

AMERICAN JEWISH
RABBI ALEXANDER M. SCHINDLER

ARCHIVES



September 7, 1993

Worcester, Massachusetts

Thank you for your overly generous introduction, Barbara. You are too kind . . . or because you are my friend, too biased in my favor. I am grateful to you, even as I reciprocate your friendship with a full heart . . . you are good friends, you and Nate, and we love you both.

It is good to be here, in this community. This is a place endeared to me by memory and by affection. I made my abode in many other places as you well know, in some far longer than those six short years I lived in your midst. But those were golden years for me, because of the love with which you embraced me and my kin, then and ever since. Someone once said that home is "that part of the world where people know when you are sick, miss you when you die, and love you while you live." Well, Worcester is that for me . . . it is my home. It has become and will remain the center of my universe.

I am surrounded by good friends here, so many, in fact, that I dare not even specify lest I exclude. But let me be honest. There is a second good reason why I dare not mention names. I've reached that stage in life when don't remember names. Yes, I'm afraid I'm in that awkward stage of forgetfulness, the age of anecdotage, that age when you call your wife "honey," - - just to play it safe. But let me at least thank the people who labored so zestfully to make this evening be. Their names, thank God, are listed in the program.

To begin with, there are the leaders of Worcester's team Rabbi Simon, Barbara and Nate Greenberg, Ina Gordon - - (Haskel's Ina . . . how much we all of us miss him) as well as Judy and Todd Yoffie. They bore the major burden of responsibility for this splendid function, and we are beholden to them all.

We are indebted also to the members of our regional leadership whose great skill and devotion made this evening so successful.

Thank you all for coming here this night. It is gracious of you to do so, to lend us your strength. In return, I can give you the assurance that the cause which your presence advances is exceedingly worthwhile.

The nexus, the connecting link, between that cause and Worcester's Reform Jewish community is exceedingly strong. It derives not just from the fact that I joined the staff of the UAHC immediately on the completion of my tenure here, or because Jim Simon left the Union's staff to become Emanuel's senior rabbi. It is a linkage which was forged long before either of us came on the scene. Thus, Joe Klein was founder of the New England Federation of Temple Youth, and Bob Siff its first President. Sophie Bretholtz of blessed memory was a mainstay of our national youth movement. Jack Hiatt was a Governor of the College. A. Albert Klein and Izz Ulian were members of our national Board, as were Harold Cotton and Judy Yoffie. Sherman Baker is still on our Board, but of course he and Lois are now expatriates.

Yet surely, your most valued gift to the National Reform Movement came when you gave us your best and brightest . . . two of this community's most accomplished sons . . . I speak of Dan Freeland and Eric Yoffie, of course. Dan was just promoted to our national program staff and holds cabinet rank . . . Eric succeeded the redoubtable, internationally renowned, Albert Vorspan as the Union's Vice President and Director of our pivotal Commission on Social Action. Both these young men are exceedingly knowledgeable and gifted. Both are ardently devoted to our people and faith. Both are bright and shining stars in the firmament of Reform Judaism. You can take just pride and

bracing comfort as do I in the knowledge that the future of our religious community rests in their most capable and loving hands.

As for the man we delight to honor, David Gould, what can I possibly tell you about him that you do not know so much better yourself. All of you are here because you hold him in high regard. He is a loyal son of this community, and the traces of his good work can be seen in many places here: in the sphere of his business life, and in the orb of those manifold institutions of human care whose work he furthers as volunteer and benefactor.

The listing of these institutions, as recorded in our program brochures, is impressive in its scope and it reflects the wide range of David's interests: universities, hospitals, museums, civic foundations, places of worship, family service agencies, and the like. Is there any cause of worth in this community that has failed to evoke his benevolent response?

It is altogether fitting that David be honored by a synagogue movement. After all, the synagogue is the matrix from which he sprang. It is his spiritual womb, as it were. Certainly, his actions are motivated in no small measure by the awareness of his Jewishness and its demands. Judaism is the source that gives his life so much of its vitality and essential direction.

He served Temple Emanuel in manifold ways and for the better part of his adult life, ever adding to its inner beauty and its outer strength. No absentee landlord he, at least during those years when I was here. He and Sarah came to Temple with regularity, especially on Sabbath mornings, although I suspect that they were moved to do so, not by a deepfelt religious impulse as much as by the desire to hear the children's choir and to listen for their well-loved daughter Ellen's ethereal voice emanating from the organ loft. How appropriate it is that Emanuel's Music Festival bear David's and Sarah's name.

David loves the Jewish people with an abounding love. He serves them wherever they are in need - - through AIPAC and the ADL, and above all, through Worcester's Jewish Federation which elected him to highest office. As a matter of fact, it was Haskell Gordon who persuaded him to assume this responsibility. That was no effortless assignment, as we well know. It imposed, rather, that most burdensome and yet quintessential of all communal tasks: the raising of money. He scratched and scraped together those material means without which spiritual ends simply cannot be served.

He also understands that it is our duty as Jews to care not just for our fellow Jews but for all of human kind - - hence his manifold services to the larger Worcester community. In a word, David is a proud and loyal son of his people, in the fullest meaning of that term, and it is altogether fitting and proper that a synagogue and its movement pause to accord him honor.

As you can imagine, my friends, in the course of my life of public service I have spoken words of tribute to a great many people, but I know no one who is more worthy of acclaim than is he. He is an altogether remarkable human being. I speak now not primarily of his outer attainments to which I already alluded to some extent. I speak now rather of the inner person, of those rich gifts of heart and spirit with which he is endowed and which enable him achieve what he did and to be what he is.

He is certainly blessed with an inventive and determined mind, which led to his business successes and enabled him to actuate procedures that others in his field would emulate.

His many attainments notwithstanding, David is essentially a humble man. He does not bloat with pride, or brook any pretense. When I asked him to lend his name to this function, he begged off - - more than once - - because he felt himself undeserving of

acclaim. "Why should anyone honor me?" He said. But he is honored by all who know him - where he works and where he lives. People respect him because he is respectful of them; because he does not insist that all wisdom resides in him; because he gives credit where credit is due. The rabbis of the Talmud were right: Honor comes to him who honors his fellow human beings.

I, for one, am especially drawn to David's joy in life. His zest for living is infectious. He has a good sense of humor - there is always a smile about his face. He holds life precious and embraces it with eagerness. He seizes each of its golden minutes. He is never too busy for the wonder and the awe of it all.

David is also an exceedingly gentle man. Never strident, always restrained. He rarely, if ever, lifts his voice in anger or impatience, not even in his home, so Ellen assures me and she put it well: "there was always as much sunshine in our house as there was out."

This is not to say that David doesn't hold strong convictions. He knows what he wants, what he wants others to be . . . But he never bullies. He prefers to persuade. He leads not by precept but rather by example. Humility, patience, simplicity, truth - - these elements combine in him in wondrous harmony.

And this above all, David genuinely cares for people. His reach in this regard is wide - - his compassion boundless, his love seamless. He understands the needs of others. He feels their pain and sorrow as his own.

Aye, he understands their anguish well, for he himself was schooled in suffering, his own heart had been lacerated when he and Sarah were made to endure that most cruel of all fates, the death of two children, first a daughter, Paula, in her younger

years, and then a second blow, their college age son, Michael. Aye, nothing in all the world is as admirable as guts, and this couple has that quality in abundant measure.

Clearly, David cares most for those who stand nearest to him: There certainly is no more faithful friend than he. Once he embraces you as such, he shuns no pain to be of help, to stand at your side. He is proud of his daughter, Ellen, and justly so. How he glories in her attainments and those attainments are great. Her poems and songs were delicious were they not, what warmth, what beauty, what love. And he has embraced her husband, Daniel, as his own.

And of course, he loves his Sarah. . . Sarah who supported him full heartedly in whatever he undertook to do. How fortunate they were to be able to mark their Golden Anniversary now five years ago. Together they walked the way of life drinking from its one cup, when it ran bitter, when it ran sweet. Giving true meaning to the words: husband, wife, and marriage.

In so many ways, then, David is Reform Judaism's image ideal . . . He represents us at our best, as we aspire to be, exemplifying the kind of activism and commitment that exalt our religious community. But we honor him best, not by giving him an award, but rather by supporting that cause that has been central to his life of public service: the nurturing of our people's spiritual being, the sustaining of the synagogue, the strengthening of its supportive institutions. This is the source that gives his life its vitality, its essential direction: This is also the source that ever sustained our people, so the great Hebrew poet, Bialik, reminded us in words most beautiful to hear:

im yesh et nafsh'cha lodaat, he wrote,

. . . if thou wouldst know . . .

"If thou wouldst know the mystic fount
from whence thy forbears drew the strength and fortitude
to meet grim death with joy and bare the neck
to every sharpened blade and lifted axe or pyres ascending
and saintlike die with shema visrael on their lips.

If thou wouldst know the mystic fount
from whence they wretched brethren drew in evil days
divine condolence, patience, fealty,
and iron strength to bear relentless toil
with shoulders stooped to bear a loathsome life
an endlessly to suffer and endure.

If thou wouldst know the mother merciful
who saved her lost sons tears with eagerness
and steadied lovingly his faltering steps.

If thou wouldst know O humble brother mine,
go to the House of Study, the House of Prayer . . .
Thy heart will tell thee then
that thy feet tread the marge of our life fount
that thine eyes view the treasure of our soul."

As it was in the past, so it is today, and will be for tomorrow.
The synagogue is the magic ingredient of our people's wondrous
endurance.

It is true of course, that in our day, Israel has come to be
considered a primary factor in assuring Jewish continuity, and it
manifestly is. Moreover, recent events in the Middle East are
heartening and have done much to allay our apprehensions
concerning Israel's future. The successful conclusion of the
talks between Israeli and PLO officials in Oslo hold forth the
promise of fundamental changes in Arab-Israeli politics - - more
extensive even than those actuated by Anwar Sadat's dramatic
visit to Jerusalem in 1977.

But there is no guarantee that these agreements will, in fact, be
implemented. Spoilers of the peace abound, foremost among
Palestinians, but among Israelis too. And even if these
agreements fail to hold - - and inveterate optimist that I am, I

trust that they will, Israel is about to take a giant leap into a future whose contours can scarcely be glimpsed.

Israel, therefore, cannot let her guard go down. It must remain vigilant. And it must continue to be strong. But in order to do so, it must rely on a strong and supportive American Jewish community. But that community will not be strong without the synagogue.

Golda Meir understood this. I will never forget what she said to a delegation of world Jews who repaired to Israel during those dim and grim days of the Yom Kippur War. Golda Meir stayed with us throughout our visit - - she clearly needed the strength and support we held forth. And as we left, this is what she said: "My friends, as you return to your communities, I will not ask you to remember us and to give us more material support. You do that in abundant measure. Nor will I ask you to rally political and material support for us in those countries in which you live - - you have done that too in abundant measure. I will ask you, rather, to return to your communities and to buttress your synagogues and schools for the struggle for Jewish survival will be fought not only along the frontiers of Israel, but in every synagogue and in every Jewish school of the world."

Golda was right, of course - - she so often was. Consider this: Who is responsible for teaching our children to be Jews? The synagogue - - our financially pressed, over-burdened, short staffed synagogues! Who will assure that there will be a Jewishly educated, Jewishly committed generation twenty years from now? Who will provide the teachers and the rabbis and the scholars for that generation? Who will assure those many other communal and national Jewish organizations a reservoir of Jews on which they will be able to draw for their membership a score years hence? Who will provide the State of Israel with a

continuing corps of understanding Jews? The answer in every case, of course, is the synagogue. It has to be the synagogue - the synagogue and those camps and seminaries and multitudinous educational efforts that they sustain.

The synagogue quite simply is the heartland of Judaism. All other Jewish institutions use Jews - - the Federations, the Defense Agencies, the AIPACs - - they all mobilize and utilize Jews in behalf of the community. But only the synagogue creates Jews. It is in the synagogue where the individual soul and the community are joined. It is in the synagogue where modernity and eternity cross-fertilize, where the seeds of the Jewish future are sown. It is the synagogue where the covenant is recreated and renewed in every generation.

We do well, then, to strengthen the synagogue and its supportive institutions. And in doing so, we render David our finest tribute more meaningful to him, surely than this Medal which I give him now. It is but a symbol and sign of our regard and affection for him. Come forward, then, David, and receive those plaudits which are your just due.

Schindler: Rosh Hashana
Union Temple, Brooklyn.
Rosh Hashana 5754

Once again, my friends we are gathered here at this turning hour
of the year.

Once again, the shrill sharp sounds of the shofar shake us from our
complacency with their demand for a cheshbon hanefesh
for a self-reckoning of the soul.

Once again, we respond as did our forbears through countless generations

How quickly the year has gone by.

Life is a mist...silvery...tremulous;

It appears for a time, then swiftly lifts
and all that is left is memory.

It is good to be here...to feel your presence...

to draw the strength which flows from this companionship.

Yet there is a sorrow intermingling with the joy of our renewed embrace.

Too many who were with us last year are here no more.

They have reached their horizon and are gone out of sight.

We miss them....We lament their passing...

But there is also the solace

-- feeble at first but growing stronger in time --

which comes with the gift of memory..

"So long as we live they too shall live,

for they are now a part of us as we remember them."

I am deeply grateful to Linda Goodman for inviting me once again. Let me confess that there is something of a Talmudic disputation up here. Last year, on Stanley's advice, I announced that I am marking my 24th year in your midst...on the basis of which Linda invited me for my 25th silver anniversary year...Alas, last night Stanley told us that this is only my 23rd high holy-day service...

Tell you what, let's promise each other, all of us, to gather once again two years hence, so mark what will truly be my silver anniversary. Be that as it may, it is good to be here...and that goes for all the Schindlers...Union Temple has become our communal home.

This is where we want to be, on these, the most holy of our days.

Now, as those of you who have worshipped here over the years know, I have made it my habit to devote at least one of my two high holy day sermons to communal rather than personal concerns.

My sermon today will be of such a kind, focusing on several of the year's events affecting Jewish life, both here and in the wider world.

Let me confess that when I thought about my year-end summary late last Spring, I could find few grists for my sermonic mill. The exodus of Russian and Ethiopian Jews, which so stirred our imagination in years past seemed spent... The peace talks were dead-locked.

Only the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto revolt and the Opening of the impressive Holocaust museum in Washington seemed worthy of comment, but these were scarcely events that would lift the spirit.

But as the year drew to a close, in the last two weeks alone,
events of enormous consequence unfolded.

In the course of half a year we re-lived the ebb and flow of
our people's century-long experience...

from enslavement to freedom

from degradation to dignity

from the remembrance of the shoah

to the envisioning of an Israel finally at peace.

* * *

Just a word or two about that unhappy anniversary we marked last Spring:
The Washington Memorial is really quite exrrtra-ordinary -- deeply moving
powerful in its outer structure and inner substance alike.

I urge you to visit it, individually, as families,
and perhaps even as a congregation.

You should undertakes such a collective journey, perhaps next April.

I say April, because Jewish custom prescribes that Holocaust Remembrance
day be marked in that month,

for it was in April that the Jews of the Warsaw ghetto
rose up against their opporessors.

Come to think of it, though, this is a most unlikely time
to mark so somber and melancholy an occasion.

After all, April is the first full month of Spring,

and Spring is the time "when the air is calm and pleasant," so
Milton wrote, "and it were an injury and sullenness against nature
not to go out and see her riches and partake in her rejoicing."

As individuals, we can well do that,
we can go out into the public gardens and rejoice,
roll up our sleeves to feel a little Springtime warmth;
but as Jews rolled-up sleeves all too quickly quickly remind us
of those numbers tatooed on the arms of death camp inmates

As individuals we can rejoice in April showers
and breathtaking rainbows;
but as Jews we cannot hear of "showers" without shuddering,
nor view a rainbow without thinking of the Nazi killers
who shattered its radiance,
who took its colors and pinned them to our hearts:
yellow for Jews...red for communists,
brown for gypsies...pink for gays,
and on and on through the spectrum of murdered souls.

As individuals we can hearken to the Song of Solomon:

"arise...my fair one, come away!

But as Jews, we are mired in aganozizing memories and cannot come away.
We cannot see a meadow without thinking of mass graves.

We cannot see a dancing butterfly without recalling the poem
of a 12-year-old Jewish girl inmate of Theresienstadt
who said of her captivity that she "never saw another butterfly."

Oh, would that we could forget.

But quick forgetting is not the reality of a people who lost
one third of their number in half a decade;
who lost one and one half million of their children,

in that time, innocent, guiltless all!
Quick healing is not the reality of a people for whom nature itself
was defiled by the Nazi murderers
who sowed bones instead of seeds in the month of April!

But whether Spring or Fall or Winter or summer,
program for such a congregational pilgrimage.
It will not be an easy journey, nonetheless you ought embark on it...
After all, we survivors are the spokepeople of the dead...
and it is our duty to be their witnesses.

* * *

But let me move on from these somber remembrances to those events of
more recent days which so filled us with wonderment.
Those scenes we watched on television last Monday defied belief.
Rabin shaking the hands of an Arafat...Jew and Arab embracing.
Erstwhile bitter enemies crossing the swollen rivers
of hatred and war in order to sow the seeds of peace...

If implemented, the Oslo plan coupled with the declaration of
mutual recognition, holds forth the promise
of a strategic turning point in Arab Israeli politics
a turning point more sweeping than was
Sadat's dramatic journey to Jerusalem .

It is a moment which allows us to dream great dreams...
of Israel as the Hong Kong of a new Middle East
of Jews and Palestinians joining forces to build it,
a Middle East, like Beneleux or the U.S. or a United Europe,
a united continent of great tolerance and real freedom,

of science, of education, and of understanding...

It is a dream which the Israelis dream --

and which is probably shared by many Palestinians as well.

Witness, if you will that the new pact is filled with clauses about transportation links, and development banks, canal digging and grid linking --

mundane schemes of all kinds between Israel and Jordan and the Palestinian territories

schemes which could give substance to that vision of a new and peaceful and flourishing Middle East.

Oh, how proud I am of Israel's leaders...

They had the power to prevail by force, but they opted for peace. And their words were in fullest harmony with the lofty teachings of Judaism..

"Let us all turn from bullets to ballots," said Peres, "from guns to shovels."

And Yitzchak Rabin declared:

"We who have fought against you, the Palestinians, we say to you today, in a loud and clear voice, enough of blood and tears, enough."

These words are the words of statesmen.

They are words which do honor to their spiritual progenitors, the prophets of Israel.

* * *

Our euphoria of the moment needs be tempered by realism.

We know full well that this is only the beginning of a long and demanding journey whose successful conclusion is not foregone.

Spoilers of the peace abound.

Israel has its right-wingers and Westbank settlers.

Demonstrations have already taken place...

The Prime Minister's residence in Jerusalem is virtually under siege...

Ideological extremists swear that they will shoot at any Arab policeman who carries a gun

Indeed, orthodox political ideologues had the temerity

to pray in protest , in Lafayette park, opposite the White House carrying large pictures of the Lubavicher Rebbe and placards denouncing the peace pact and damning Rabin.

As for the PLO, there is Hamas...and Hamas will wage war in order to interdict the peace process...(PLO assented exiling of the 400)

These Iranian backed moslem militants will fight to the death to topple Arafat and the PLO.

I am confident that Rabin will be able to prevail over the extremists The preponderant majority of Israelis yearn for peace...

They may be ambivalent, concerned about the risks entailed, but when all is said and done they will opt for hope over despair.

Arafat has far graver problem in this regard.

Once he moves his headquarters from Tunis to Jericho

he will have to deliver and deliver fast.

He has to demonstrate that he can govern.

He has to restrain the fundamentalists - by force, if need be, -- and it will be necessary.

And he has to improve the lot of his people promptly

or the streets will follow Hamas rather than the PLO.

To that end, the Palestinians will need lots of help,
an infusion of cash from many places.

I was at a White House breakfast a week ago last Monday...
I sat at the President's table...one seat away from him...
and we talked of the news which had just broken.

President Clinton was enthusiastic about the opportunity for peace
which beckons...

and he expressed his determination to do what he must
to seize that opportunity, not to let it slip away.

Rhea attended the signing ceremony earlier this week,
and a subesequent briefing in the Executive Office building
She too heard the President pledge America's help,
and report that Japan, the Skandinavian countries as well
as Saudi Arabia have committed substantial resources
for this purpose.

Israel will doubtlessly continue to provide its aid package
to the Palestinians.

The intefada masked the fact that over the years the Jewish state
poured a good deal of money into the territories,
to prop up their sick economies,
and as an act of enlightened self interest.

* * *

Yes, the road ahead is rocky.

It will be difficult to traverse.

Israel is taking enormour risks for peace.

Troubling questions loom: Can the PLO be trusted after so many years of terrorism and hatred? Has Arafat really changed his spots? Will the Palestinian masses accept his leadership? Can he restrain the bitter-enders within the PLO itself? Will the PLO be able to muster sufficient force to beat back the militant and keep order in the streets? And this above all -- is not autonomy the first step toward the creation of a Palestinian State -- as I. for one, believe it to be...what then?... Only time will answer these vexing questions...

I, for one, believe that Israel was wise to take that "brave gamble" of which President Clinton spoke...All great diplomacy is that...^{-- a gamble} Churchill once said that you can't leap over a chasm in two steps... He was right. If you worry about too many details, you become paralyzed. Besides, there was an even greater peril in doing nothing,

in permitting the status quo to fester... The status quo sowed the seeds of endless conflict. It corroded the Jewish and democratic character of the State. It was a demographic time-bomb ticking away at Israel's vital center and threatening to shatter its being.

Let us remember also that while Israel may be trading land for peace, it is not trading its strength for peace, Indeed, it is this very strength that opened the possibilities for peace Israel's defense forces constitute the fourth most powerful military force in the world today.

From the security perspective, the present plan is far more favorable to Israel than was the plan to which Menachem Begin assented...

Israel'd citizen soldiers were given the right to protect all Westbank and Gaza settlements.

They will have full control over the roads and passes and bridges both inland and more critically so, those providing access to the country from the North and East and South.

So there is no reason to despair and every reason to hope.

Yes, Israel is taking an enormous risk.

It ventures into a future whose contours can scarcely be discerned.

It may even be counting on a miracle, if it thinks that this gamble, however brave, will pay off.

But then, my friends, the Land of Israel has an intriguing history of miracles...does it not?

* * *

What can we do, we Jews of America whose lot has fallen in such safe and pleasant places?

We can pray for that miracle to unfold.

We can support the forces that work for peace, and counter those who don't, who are vociferous in their opposition, and there are many even here on the American Jewish scene.

-- witness a Norman Podhoretz who when Likud was in power, more than once denounced all public criticism of Israel as treasonous but now cannot quiet his own "conscience" as he put it and publicly lambasts Rabin and Peres.

-- witness Americans for a Safe Israel which has long assailed the

Israeli Peace Now movement as outsiders,
but now attempts to delegitimize the government of Israel itself
as an outsider to its destiny.

-- and witness Avi Weiss, that publicity hounding rabbi,
who takes his mandate from a medium size Riverdale synagogue,
ostentatiously parading in front of the White House last
Monday carrying a placard thich insists that
it is the Prime Minister of Israel has no mandate.

What Chuzpah, this, what unmitigated arrogance.

At the most extreme, there are the Lubavicher Chassidim who took wout
a full-page ad in the NYTimes accusing the leaders of Israeal of
selling their country down the river
and they called for a massive grassroots effort to counter
the Israel government.

This kind of incendiary language is tantamount to a call for the
waging of a civil war in Israel.

Benjamin Begin, Menachem's son, understood this, and that is why
he denounced the Lubavicher and their kindred spirits
for their recklessness, and so must we...

The democratically elected and courageous leaders of Israel
deserve our support.

Thy deserve, at the very least our fervent prayers, not muttered curses
from those who within the safe haven of these shores,
still deify land over life.

There is one other task that is ours as American Jews,
We must buttress our synagogues and schools.

Israel must remain vigilant and strong, as we have said.
To do so, it relies on a strong and supportive American Jewish community
But that community will not be strong without its synagogues and
schools..

Golda Meir, aleha hashalom, understood this.

I will never forget what she said to a delegation of American Jews
who repaired to Israel during those dim and grim days of the
Yom Kippur War.

I was with them -- having left for Israel almost immediately
after we concluded our worship services here at Union Temple.

Golda Meir remained with us almost every waking hour of our visit
almost as if she needed the strength and support we held forth.

And as we left, this is what she said:

"My friends, as you return to your communities I will not ask you
to remember us and to give us more material support. You do that
in abundant measure. Nor will I ask you to rally political and
material support for us in those countries in which you live --
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and in every Jewish school of the world."

Golda was right, of course -- she so often was. Consider this:

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Jewishly committed generation twenty years from now?

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The synagogue, wuite simply is the heartland of Judaism.

It is the place where Jews are made, where the individual soul and the community are joined.

It is the place where modernity and eternity cross-fertilize, where the seeds of the Jewish identity are sown.

All other institutions in Jewish life are created by Jews.

Only the synagogue creates Jews -- child by child, family by family, minyan by minyan,

And so let us buttress our synagogues and schools.

It is the stronghold which is ours to arm defend in the struggle for Jewish continuity.

And let us pray for the peace of Jerusalem, pray for the well-being of her people and their land.

Israel is the hope that was born out of suffering, the springs that came to the dry valley the rose that blssomed in the desert.

Bless Israel's leaders.

Continue to grant them wisdom and courage.

May their people dwell in safety

and live in friendship with all their neighbors.

Then shall the brightness of truth compassion and peace

shine forth from Zion as it is written:

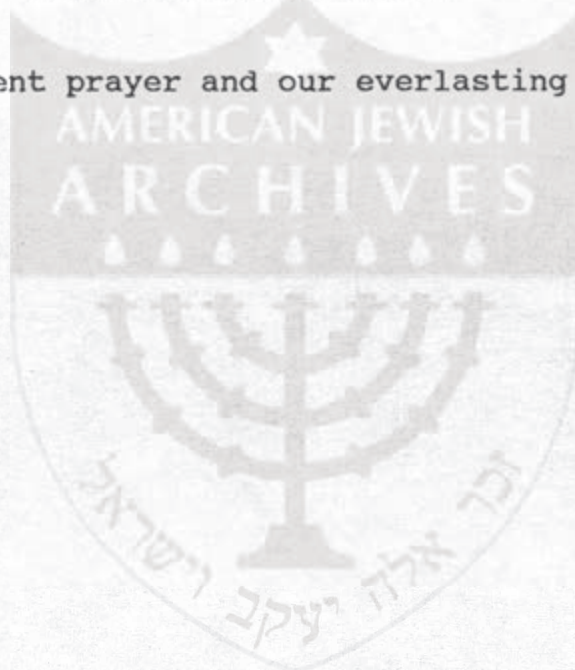
KI METZION TEYTSE TORAH UD'VAR ADONAI MI'JERUSHALAYIM

For out of Zion shall go forth the Law,

and the word of God from Jerusalem.

This is our fervent prayer and our everlasting hope.

Amen...





November 14, 1993
Liberty State Science Center
New Jersey

As you can imagine, my friends, over the years I have attended quite a few functions such as this, but no event has given me greater delight than does this, honoring as it does a colleague of the Union staff and a friend. Dan Freeland is that to me - a good friend. I admire him, I hold him in high regard and I sense him to be a kindred spirit - a second self as it were. To begin with, he comes from Worcester, Massachusetts - and that, as you well know, is a place endeared to me by memory and by affection.

From a communal rather than from a genealogical perspective, Dan is a creature of the Reform movement: he attended Temple Religious School, is an alumnus of Camp Eisner, was an active leader of the New England Federation of Temple Youth and ultimately was trained and ordained at HUC-JIR. And thus, Danny is a striking, splendid exemplar of what our religious community can create when we are at our best.

Dan's entire professional life was spent in the service of the UAHC: as a camp programmer for Eisner and Kutz, as NFTY Associate, and as New Jersey/West Hudson Valley Council Director for the past eleven years. Myra Ostroff is to speak after me and to make a presentation to Dan and so I will not step on her lines to tell you what his many accomplishments in this region were. Let me say only that I am particularly grateful to him for his creation of the Bergen Academy of Reform Judaism, even as I am appreciative of the fact that he kept the Jersey Mitzvah Corps alive and well during his years in office.

Whatever Dan undertakes to do, he does with all his heart and might, and with brilliant success. He is a superb administrator, with an eye and patience for detail, and the ability and courage to make decisions. Thus, he represents a rare blending of intellect and imagination. Both sides of his brain - - the administrative and the creative - - are equally well endowed. He combines within him the mind of the executive and the soul of the poet.

Aye, the soul of the poet - - that is Dan's most treasured gift. He feels great truths and then he sings them. It is this gift, above all others, which makes him so priceless a jewel of our religious community.

All his life, Dan composed and sang melodies for religious schools and youth groups and camps. His compositions, often in collaboration with Jeff Klepper, have greatly enriched synagogue song. Indeed, his leadership of the Joint Commission on Synagogue Music promises to transform Reform liturgical music. He was only its part time Director, yet see how much he accomplished! He devoted endless hours to the painstaking task of editing Shaarey Shira and Manginot which were published under the Commissions aegis and those of us who entered the portals of Reform Judaism with the red covered, gold embossed, protestant flavored Union Hymnal in hand know how far reaching a change these publications wrought.

Dan is blessed with a beautifully expressive voice which moves the listeners deeply. It does more than give pleasure. It evokes feeling, it inspires, and it moves to action. Witness, if you will, how the crowds responded to him when he sang at rallies for Israel or Soviet Jewry.

Dan has a well refined sense of the beautiful, of the essential fitness of things not just in music, but in other forms of art and life as well. Consider the Hakafot at our Biennials, beginning with Baltimore, which he suggested. Consider, above all, the on-screen projection of the Torah reading during Shabbat morning services - - this, too, was his brain child. That proved to be one of the most impressive moments of the San Francisco Biennial, did it not? Indeed, it received more applause during that photo collage reprise at the concluding session than did Hillary Clinton. I am confident that it will be emulated in many congregations if their architecture permits it - - and Dan is expert in that field too. And once emulated, these projections, with a variety of other applications, will transform the worship experience in its entirety.

This is really what I hope that Dan will achieve during his tenure in the national office: not the more effective coordination of the Union's many varied programs, important as that task might be, but rather and above all, the enhancement of the worship experience. For here is our most lamentable shortcoming as a movement: religious services which in too many places are dry as dust. A religious community which fails to inspire people in communal worship might as well dissolve.

There is one more quality of Danny's which so draws us to him. His caring, his compassion, his essential humanity. He listens to people, he feels their pain, and quickly strives to allay it. This is why so many people turn to him for counsel: rabbis, lay leaders, students, friends. They come to him with their institutional problems as well as their more personal questions. They come to him with their institutional problems as well as their more personal questions and always find a hearing ear and a helping hand.

Obviously, he cares most for those who are closest to him. Elyse tells me that he fills his home with the same understanding that he brings to his life's task, that he provides each of his three children - Adam, Jonah, and Devra - with love and caring. As for Elyse, she herself attests to his love. When people tell her that women rabbis are more sensitive than male rabbis, she invariably replies: "I suggest you meet my husband."

Our deep felt thanks, then, go to Sunny and Aviva Freeland, Dan's parents, for rearing so wonderful a Jew. To Elyse and their children for sharing him with us. And to Dan himself - - for what he does and is. I, for one, am heartened by the knowledge that so much of the future of Reform Jewry rests in his capable and caring hands. And now I call on the singularly effective President of this region, Myra Ostroff.



FRJ Dinner in Honor of Dan Freeland
AM Schindler, November 14, 1993

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~~which provides Jewish education for high-schooler~~
~~of nine of our Bergen County Congregations...~~

-- even as I am appreciative of the fact that he kept the Jersey Mitzvah
Corps alive and well during his years in office.

~~This is the 25th year of that altogether worthy project.~~

Dan succeeded at these and many endeavors largely because he has
the ability to motivate and to involve lay leadership.

Few on our staff are more skillful in achieving this than Dan.

He is willing to share authority and responsibility with lay leaders.

He has the self confidence required to do so.

And therefore people respond to him and want to work with him.

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MAURICE N. EISENDRATH BEARER OF LIGHT AWARD
of the

UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS



62nd General Assembly

October 23, 1993
San Francisco, CA

In the annals of the Jewish people, a golden page will be devoted to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, the chosen instrument of the Jewish community for the rescue, relief and rehabilitation of Jews in distress in foreign lands. Tonight we honor a true woman of valor, Sylvia Hassenfeld, chair of the JDC Board, who served as its president for four vital years from December 1988 to December 1992.

The work of the Joint is holy work, and our Talmud speaks of it. It is known as pidyan shevuim -- redemption of the captives. The "Joint," as it is known in every corner of the world, has been redeeming the persecuted and the homeless among our people for nearly eighty years. Its achievements in behalf of our people are nothing less than noble. In its earliest days JDC provided relief to Jews trapped by the warring armies of World War I. Then came the Hitler years, when JDC worked heroically to rescue Jews from the Nazi terror. Not enough were saved, but those who were owed their lives to the Joint. A new era began after the war, when hundreds of thousands of Jews who survived the Hitler years quit Europe to begin new lives in Israel, America, Australia and Latin America, and hundreds of thousands took flight from Arab lands to begin life anew in Israel -- all with the vital help of the Joint.

When Sylvia Hassenfeld came to the leadership of the Joint, the organization was working secretly in the Soviet Union and other countries in Eastern Europe, providing prayer books and school books, helping keep alive the flickering flame of Judaism in the Communist world. Working in close cooperation with the Jewish Agency, JDC brought thousands of Jews from Eastern Europe to Israel. Operation Magic Carpet, when Jews were flown to Israel on the wings of eagles, as in the Biblical prophecy, was a JDC operation.

The Joint was also involved in the rescue of Jews from Ethiopia. The schools, the medical facilities, the food kitchens which sustained the life of our correligionists in that land were for the most part established and operated by the Joint.

Sylvia Hassenfeld was a part of all that: she was at its center. She was its driving force. The mitzvah of pidyan shevuim, of rescuing the oppressed, became the core motivating force in her life. Where ever there was a Jewish community which was embattled - she was there.

This is no extravagant exaggeration. She literally travelled around the world for JDC, from Bucharest to Bombay, from Tiflis to Tunis, from Budapest to Buenos Aires. Wherever there was a single Jew in danger, in whatever continent or country or the remotest corner of our far flung world, there she was to be found...lending her hand and heart -- energizing the help of that splendid organization which she led with so much dignity.

Personal danger was no restraining force for her. Thus, when war broke out in what had once been Yugoslavia, she felt it important to see what was happening at first hand. When she made arrangements to fly there, a fellow officer who had been asked to accompany her, asked her: "Sylvia, isn't it dangerous to go to Bosnia?" Her reply was a classic: "Alan," she said, "when we get there, we'll find out." She went and subsequently JDC came to the rescue once again, transporting hundreds of Jews out of Sarajevo, by truck convoy through dangerous territory, first to the coast and then to Israel.

What more can I tell you? She is a gracious human being. warm in her human approach. She has exquisite features, features made fair by the compassion and love which flow from her heart.

Aye, she always aspires to be not only beautiful in countenance, but also beautiful in deed, as befits a beautiful daughter of our people.

She is with us tonight to receive our highest award, the Maurice Eisendrath Bearer of Light Award. How appropriate, for Sylvia Hassenfeld has borne light to the Jewish people.

Men and women of Reform Judaism, I am honored to make this presentation to her and to present her to you.