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4

"Thoughts on My Denver Ministry." January 1952.

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Alman

"THOUGHTS ON MY DENVER MINISTRY"

This evening in preaching my last sermon to you I should like to offer ten principles or observations in regard to the Denver Reform Jewish community. These principles are not logically connected but rather random and haphazard. They are also not new or original but rather things I have said from this pulpit again and again. They sum up in effect what I have tried to say during my two years here. It is possible that not all of you will agree with each of these principles, some of them maybe open to question or controversial in nature. But they represent my thoughts and feelings and I present them to you in all sincerity.

The first of these is the undeniable fact that your attendance at Temple services is poor. There are in this congregation approximately fifteen hundred men and women and children. There is not more than ten per cent of this number to estimate liberally at the average Temple service. This figure compares so unfavorably with what the Christian churches get that I am frankly ashamed to quote further figures or statistics. Whatever else Judaism may be it certainly is first and foremost a religion. If there is little interest in religious service and devotion than all other aspects of Jewish life must inevitably suffer as well. Why there should be this spiritual malaise among Jews is a sermon in itself, but either we foresake material pursuits in favor of the spiritual or we perish as a religion.

The second principle which flows inevitably from this is that Jewish life cannot be centered alone around anti-Semitism and philanthropy. Important as these things are they are essentially negative. We need Jews who know what they are for as much as those who know what they are against; Jews who'll carry their Jewishness as a mark of honor and not as a badge of shame. It is the duty, I feel, of the Temple and