



Abba Hillel Silver Collection Digitization Project

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MS-4787: Abba Hillel Silver Papers, 1902-1989.

Series IV: Sermons, 1914-1963, undated.

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Life with Mother, 1956.

"LIFE WITH MOTHER"

On the occasion of the special sisterhood service

May 13, 1956

I have praised many loved ones in my song
 And yet I stand
 Before her shrine, to whom all things belong,
 With empty hand;
 Perhaps the ripening future holds a time
 For things unsaid;
Not now; men do not celebrate in rhyme
 Their daily bread.

I have often thought of this verse, and of its meaning, and I have asked myself whether that were really true -- that men do not celebrate in rhyme their daily bread. And if it is true, why should it be true. It seems to me that we should celebrate, in rhyme or in prayer, our daily bread, in its literal and in its figurative sense. Our people taught us to thank God who brings forth bread out of the earth. For every morsel of bread we are admonished to ^{offer} ~~bring-forth~~ thanksgiving. The grateful heart is always celebrating, whether in rhyme or in deed, or in thought, and is offering thanksgiving for all the gifts of life. For all the goodness of the world. We have been taught by our faith to say, "Blessed art Thou, O Lord" not only for bread, but for all the good things which we enjoy, for wine, for fruit and for spices and for fragrant plants, on seeing a beautiful tree or a rainbow -- for all that is beautiful in our world, whether it be physical beauty or spiritual beauty, or the beauty of service -- for all the beauty and the grace and the goodness that are in the world. The famous Rabbi Judah/^{who} compiled the Mishna, was regarded as a great jurist - and we associate with the rabbis of old, law and the intricacies of legal interpretation, - we don't think of them as poets - with human emotions and sensitiveness - who reacted to the world about them not merely intellectually but also emotionally -- this same Rabbi Judah , the Prince, the head of the Jewish community, of his day declared:

"In the Spring, when a man goes forth and sees a beautiful tree swaying in the air, he should stop and offer a prayer: 'Blessed is the Lord for having created a world in which nothing is wanting and for having fashioned beautiful things and beautiful plants and trees to delight the heart of man'."

Everything in God's world, of which we partake for the sustenance of our lives and for the satisfaction of our needs - everything is holy and therefore it is forbidden for a man to enjoy anything of this world without a benediction.

I think men should celebrate, whether in word or deed or thought, to some symbolic act, like mother's day, like father's day, their daily bread. And if it is true of beautiful things and objects in nature, that we ought to give thanks for, how much more so for the gifts of human relationships - to the gifts of family, of mother, of father, of children -- for the joys and satisfactions, the rare joys and satisfactions which they give us - to how much thanksgiving we should offer for them-- for all of them, and foremost among them for mothers.

It was a wise writer who said "There are only three true idealists: God, Mother and Poets. They do not look, he said, for the ideal in the realm of perfection they find it in imperfection. And that in my mind is a very profound observation -- very profound indeed! Most people look for the ideal in perfection. Most people are prepared to admire perfection and if they are not prepared to admire or applaud perfection they are envious of perfection. It is only God and the great Poet and Mother who look for their ideal not in the realm of perfection, they find it in imperfection. We turn to God, for example, in the full realization of our imperfections, our sins, our failings, our weaknesses. We turn to God to bind up our wounds, to heal our broken hearts. When we are in darkness we turn to Him for light. When our sins, when we realize that our sins are as red as scarlet, we somehow feel that He, the understanding Divine spirit, will make them white as snow. And that theme that runs like a golden thread through all the great religious poetry of the Bible,

The Psalmist - 103.10: "He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor requite us according to our iniquities.-- As a father pities his children, so the Lord pities those who revere Him. For he knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust."

It is in our imperfections that God seeks us and finds us and it is because of our imperfections, our frustrations, our inadequacies, that we turn to Him. To complete our incompleteness -- to give us the strenght in our weakness.

And the true Poet, dear friends, is also a true idealist. He too finds the ideal in the realm of imperfection, except when he sings of God's handiwork - Nature! Otherwise, whether in epic poetry or lyric poetry or dramatic poetry, the true poet will sing of the great longings and anxieties, and the desperate upreachings of men. He will sing of sorrow and of suffering and of loss and of bereavement in death. He will ~~sing-also-~~ see all the wrong that is done under the sun, of injustice, of revolt, of chains and the struggles of men for all forms of freedom. He will sing of love which is as strong as death and of jealousy which is as cruel as the grave. Of all the urgencies and all the imperfections which give poignancy as well as grandeur to man's checkered and colorful career on earth. To the realm of imperfection - that is where the Poet sings his song.

And that is of course ~~true~~ of mothers and perhaps truest for she is the ^{noblest} ~~truest~~ ~~and-perhaps-the-noblest~~ idealist on earth seeking her fulfillment in the realm of imperfection. Mothers are never deterred or discouraged by the imperfections of those whom they love. Mothers will praise and encourage and even cause their love to expand if that were possible, their solicitude, their care and devotion, when they become fully aware of the imperfections of their dear ones and of their defects and their blemishes, physical or mental or spiritual. They will give back to their ones their confidence when the world has shattered it. When men have been rejected by the world, mothers become their sanctuary. The loving heart of the mother becomes a shelter of men, from the hurt and the taunt and the mockery and the defeats of the world. You will recall of course that famous line of Kipling's which has become rather threadbare through excessive use, but which is nevertheless a profound statement,

"If I were hanged on the highest hill, Mother O 'Mine, O, Mother O' Mine,
I know whose love would follow me there, Mother O' Mine."

It is the kind of love in imperfections which follows men to the ultimate stage of degradation if need be, seeking their transfiguration. It is this idealist which

not only helps us in the primitive, rudimentary imperfections of our lives which teaches us how to eat and how to drink and how to walk and how to dress, but even more profoundly how to endure, how to adjust, how to surmount failures -- how to master situations-- in other words it teaches us the maturity of life - how to become men and women in spite of all the imperfections with which all human beings are born.

The bible often speaks of (the Torah of your mother).
A very significant phrase. It speaks of (the Torah of God).
It also speaks of (the Torah of your mother) for it is the mother, even more than the father, even more than the teacher, even more than the community, all of whom have functions of instructions and factoring to do in the life of a human being - but more than all of those it is the mother who instructs the child in the way of life and ^{who} ~~it~~ determines the way of life for the child.

A medieval Jewish sage, Jonah Ben Abraham Gerondi said that when the Torah was given to Israel, "Moses, our Master, peace be with him, was bidden to speak first to the House of Israel, and this means to the mothers." For according to the very beautiful tradition of the rabbis (a house, a home) means mother. "And why was Moses bidden to speak first to the mothers? Because it is they who send their sons to school; because they keep an eye upon their children, so that they may occupy themselves with the Torah, and move their hearts with good words, so that their longing be directed to the Torah; and they watch over them lest they go idle instead of learning the Torah; because they teach them the fear of sin, even in childhood, as it is written: 'Train up a child in the way he should go, and even when he is old, he will not depart from it'".

Now the loveliest thing about our mothers is that they themselves are not perfect, and the wisest among them realizes it. And children reciprocate by loving them in spite of their imperfections, although children, and as a rule are not nearly as patient, as tolerant, and as understanding and as sympathetic with the imperfections which they may find in their parents, than the parents are of their children. Sometimes mothers forget that their greatest opportunity and

their greatest challenge, and their greatest privilege is just this -- to impart the Torah (The Torah) of the mother). And Torah does not merely mean the five books of Moses, or the twenty-four books of the Bible. It means the whole code of spiritual and ethical conduct which our people through the centuries developed, which represents its supreme contribution to the civilization of the world. Sometimes mothers overindulge their children because of their great love. That's not Torah -- that's indulgence, indulgence of self through the over-indulgence of the objects of our affections. Sometimes mothers are inclined - some mothers - to leave the rearing of their children to nurses and kindergartens and to schools and to the street, for they are too busy with other things and too often away from their homes -- that's not Torah - that's lack of wisdom - for they are missing the supreme joy of life in completely integrating themselves in the life of a growing child -- ^{which} ~~this~~ is a supreme miracle in the world. Sometimes mothers, in thoughtlessness, set false standards for their children - false values. They overstress the importance of wealth and of things and of display and of society, instead of stressing the importance of character and conduct and culture and good manners and social cooperativeness. That's not Torah either - those are the very things which Torah has deprecated -- the worshipping the Golden Calf of false standards in life. Yes, there are mothers who have considerable mending to do - in more than one way - the mending of their own lives, the mending of their ^{lives of their} children. But Mother's Day - this beautiful day - is dedicated not to expressions of self-criticism, or criticism from which no one is , but to the expressions of love, affection and appreciation.

Every so often I come upon a situation as do all ministers and ^{many} ~~all~~ other people engaged in various professions - in fact in all callings of life - I come upon a situation in which a mother is involved, which recalls to my mind the words of the great American Poet, Joaquim Miller

"The bravest battle that ever was fought;
Shall I tell you where and when?
On the maps of the world you will find it not --
It was fought by the mothers of men."

While in Israel, a few weeks ago, visiting the Negev, the Southern part of the country - the territory in the new settlements - I chanced to meet a middle aged couple who appeared to me to have been through some great tribulation. Very often you sense that, almost instinctively. There was a certain quiet, sad grace about them - something perhaps in their eyes that tells you that this man or this woman has been through the deep waters of life. This happened to be ^athe new settlement in the Negev - still in the rough - which was being settled in temporary shelters and quarters by Jews from Morocco, but this man and this woman were clearly not from Morocco. I inquired about them as we were walking through this new settlement and I was told that they came from Tel Aviv - that they had been old settlers in the country and that they now go from new settlement to new settlement to live among the poorest and newest arrivals to help them get settled. They share with them their rather primitive surroundings and their humble quarters to look after them, tenderly, kindly especially after their children, with unusual love and devotion so that they had sort of become ~~xxxxxxx~~ a legend in the country of these ^{two} new people. And whenever a new settlement is sort of fixed for the time being and the new arrivals had found themselves, these two pick up and go to the next new settlement. The name of these people was Guber - the father's name was Mordecai, the mother's name was Rebecca, and the Prime Minister of Israel, David Ben Gurion had hailed them in one of his public addresses - hailed the mother, Rebecca Guber as a reborn mother of the Maccabees. She had two sons - one was called . He was a fourth child, the first to remain alive. She was too sick and too worn to nurse this child and kind mothers among her neighbors nursed him to health. Tenderly she looked after him. It was the most precious gift of God that could have come to her. And when he reached school age, and poor though they were, they saw to it that he received a school education, when he reached school age, the mother embroidered a flag, as a present to the school, and with the flag she sent a letter to the school in which she wrote

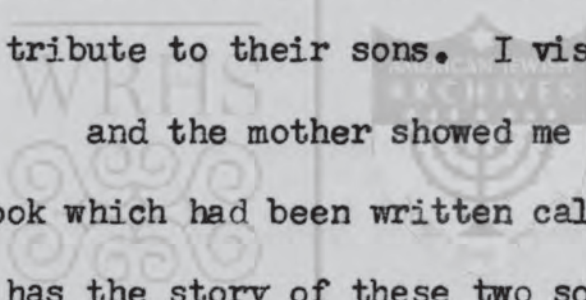
"Happy children! for you are born in the homeland, and we have not caused you to inherit the burden of yearnings from which so many generations suffered. From the day you were born the light of the pure skies of the homeland was seen reflected in your eyes. Your tiny hands have played with its sand. Those are the hands with which you will sow and plant amid the sands, where you played when you

were tiny. The Shechina rests upon your fingertips. May the hands that grow up to toil be blessed!

"Gather strength in your arms, and a brave spirit in your souls, and raise the banner proudly and firmly!"

Ephraim grew up, a fine sturdy lad, full of life who loved sports and was seemingly well-liked among his schoolmates. A few years after Ephraim was born another boy, another son was born to Mordecai and Rebecca Guber, and they named him Zvi. When the war of liberation broke out, Ephraim, the older son, immediately joined the Israeli forces and was killed in battle at the age of twenty-one. When the news reached the Gubers, Zvi, the younger son, immediately enlisted. He too was a gifted young man, a very promising young writer and poet, and his mother herself described the last time she saw Zvi. "I saw him once again," writes the young mother, "but just for a moment, on his way to the front, on the 2nd of July. It was a Friday evening. . . For the last time Zvi saw the sight which he loved most throughout his brief life: The atmosphere of the approaching Sabbath to be felt in the home, the white tablecloth, the embroidered cloth over the bread, the candles in the candlesticks, a bottle and glasses for wine. The large table had been opened and prepared for eight people, although only we two 'old folks' had remained at home. Zvi asked at once: 'Are there guests?' 'Of course,' said I. 'Most of the women have left the village with their children, so I have invited ~~the~~ some soldiers ~~neighbors~~ at the Friday evening meal.' He liked this very much, looked at me affectionately and his gaze travelled to the picture of Ephraim on the wall. 'And where is father?' 'Unfortunately Father is away at the moment'- also at the front and the Commander urged the men to start. I looked for something to give to Zvi but the soldiers were going off to the isolated Negev along a narrow and dangerous path and could not take any unnecessary burdens. Neither Zvi, nor any other of them needed anything. They took nothing with them on the way, save their young and blossoming lives; and those they also gave for us.... Beside the lorry I clung to him for an instant. I heard the beating of his great heart, which contained all of me and all of my children, in their lives and in their deaths. In him they all lived. 'Don't cry, Mother!' said he in a voice which was astonishingly like that

Ephraim. I strained my thoughts and imagination in order to find even a single word fit for the way in which he was going; but in vain. I could find nothing in my feverish brain, except the customary blessing of the grandmothers, which I whispered in his ear: 'May you weep after my burial.' At five o'clock Mordecai and I went to the dairy with the milk. A lorry stopped beside us. The soldiers asked if they might drink water. I ran home, fetched cups and gave them milk to drink. Zvi himself was already in those advanced posts to which these soldiers were hastening. I did not know that Zvi's fate had already been sealed. My heart was full of thanksgiving. I imagined to myself what Zvi might have felt if he had met with soldiers on their way to the front, among them so many of his own age. I could hear him crying in his heart: 'We have and have had no other alternative. . . .'

Zvi was killed at the age of seventeen, just four months after his brother Ephraim. These two parents, crushed though they were, remained in spirit, undefeated and that was their greatest tribute to their sons. I visited their little shack in this area ~~in~~ near  and the mother showed me the photographs of Ephraim and Zvi and she gave me a book which had been written called (The
Book of ^{Two} ~~the~~ Brothers) which has the story of these two sons.

This is not a unique story of Mordecai and Rebe~~ka~~^{ka} Guber. Thousands and tens of thousands of mothers, unfortunately in our lifetime and throughout the ages have seen their sons sacrificed to war. I tell it because it is just the latest of dramas of motherhood that has come to my attention; ^{because} I was tremendously stirred by the courage and the fortitude, especially, of this mother, which in her work, in service, in devotion, day by day, toward other children, toward other sons, ^{for} ~~toward~~ the land which she loved, for the cause in which she believed, was paying tribute to the memory of children whom she had and loved and lost. There is a grandeur and a holiness to such a life - such a way of facing life - which can well inspire men - all men - to their noblest and their best.

Perhaps men should celebrate daily ~~the work~~ in word or deed or thought, their daily bread which is the gift of a good mother.

Amen.

^{Sermon 898}
I have praised many loved ones in my song,
And yet I stand
Before her shrine, to whom all things belong,
With empty hand:

Perhaps the ripening future holds a time
For things unsaid;
Not now; when to not celebrate in rhyme
Their daily bread.



4) I read you these lines - (Quote)

And yet one should celebrate in rhyme their
daily bread - in rhyme or in prose - (7/5/24)

The grateful heart is always celebrating - in
words - ~~in~~ deeds - ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ ~~thought~~ ^{thought} - ~~for all~~ and
of fervent ^{up} thanks giving - for all the goodness of
life - for all ~~our~~ ^{its} gifts - ~~for mother and father~~
~~and children~~ -

~~and children~~
"Blessed art thou, O Lord" we are taught to recite ~~yet~~
only for bread but for wine - for fruit and species
and fragrant plants, on seeing a beautiful tree or
a rainbow; For all the ~~beauty, physical and spiritual,~~
that are in the world. - They
Engel.

R. Tisdale declared: "In the spring when a man walks
forth and sees a beautiful tree swaying in the air, he
should stop and offer a prayer: 'Blessed be the Lord for
having created a world in which nothing is wanting
and for having fashioned living things and beautiful plants
and trees to delight the heart, man'."

Everything in God's world, which was partakes for
restlessness and for the rate portion, his needs is holiness,
 and therefore it is forbidden to a man to enjoy anything
 of this world without a benediction.

2). If this is true of beautified things and objects in

ration - how much more so - of the gift of mother (2)
for this a children - and the joys and satisfactions which
they give us - and the thanks, ~~very~~ which we should
give for them +. And present among them Mother

3/ "There are only three ^{true} ideals: God, Mother and Poets. They
do not look for the ideal in the realm of perfection -
they find it in imperfection."

Something very profound about this concomitant observation.

⑤ We turn to God in the realization of our imperfections
our sins and failings and weaknesses.

- We turn to God to bind up our wounds - to
heal our broken hearts

- When we are in darkness - we turn to Him for light

- ~~The P.~~ When our sins are as red as scarlet - we
feel that He will make them white as snow

The Psalmist - 103.10: "He does not deal with us

according to our sins, nor requite us according to our
iniquities. - As a father pities his children, so the Lord
pities those who reverence him. For he knows our frame;
he remembers that we are dust."

⑥ The Poet is a true idealist. He too ~~deals~~ finds
the ideal in the realm of imperfection - except
when he sings of God's handiwork nature! -

Other wise - whether in epic or lyric verse - or in
drama - ~~the~~ will sing of glory and anxiety

4/ 7/1/1 x 2/1/1 - instructions in the way of life - (quote Jonah b. Abraham Gerondi) (p. 20)

5/ Excellent thing abt our Mothers - not themselves perfect - ~~but~~ and insist among them realize it. - We too, replicate by living things in fact, their unperfect. This we do not as patient, or tolerant, or sympathetic. Same, at times, forget that their greatest effect is

7/1/1 x 2/1/1 -

- Some over-indulge bce. of their great love.
- Some ~~believe that they are raising~~ leave ~~raising~~ standards & values -
- Some ~~as too busy~~ set for standards & values -
- circumstances of wealth - display - society -
- character - conduct - collections - culture -
- There are mothers who have some meaning to do in world & no way - their own lives - the children they are raising

6/ But ~~the~~ Mother's Day is dedicated to expression of love and affection - not to criticism or self-criticism. ~~None is perfect save God~~ -

7/ Every one in a while I came upon a sentence in which a Mother is involved - which recalls my mind the words of Joaquin Miller -

"The bravest battle that ever was fought;
Shall I tell you where and when?
On the maps of the world you will find it not -
It was fought by the mothers of men."

8) In Israel - ²²¹ - I dreamed when a middle aged ⁵
couple - who ~~appeared to~~ ^{had} been there some great tribulation
New settlement - still in the rough - of Moroccan type ~~unusual~~
Clearly this husband and wife - were not Moroccan -
I was told - ~~that~~ ^{the} ~~old~~ ^{new} settlement - and that they so from ~~the~~ ^{new} settlement
to another - him among the recent ~~of~~ ^{of} recent arrivals - to
help them get settled - very primitive conditions - ~~that~~ ^{they}
e.g. their humble quarters - look after their ~~house~~ ^{children}
children - When family settled - ~~was~~ ^{was} on - work
with much love & ~~so~~ ^{so} devotion - that they have become a
sort of legend in the country ^{For they were 1931. ~~1931~~}
In ground further - Guliel - ^{mother's name} Rebecca
And David ben Simon had ~~had~~ ^{had} ~~her~~ ^{her} ~~as~~ ^{as} ~~the~~ ^{the}
Maccabees, WRHS
She had two sons - One Eliezer - Her fourth child
- the first to remain alive - She was too young to
miss her ~~as~~ ^{as} ~~our~~ ^{our} child - and third ~~neighbor's~~ ^{neighbor's} mother
among her neighbors raised him. ~~He~~ ^{He} ~~was~~ ^{was} ~~for~~ ^{for} ~~this~~ ^{this} ~~they~~ ^{they}
were - she gave him 1931 an education. When he
reached school age - embroidered a flag as a present to
the school - with it she sent a letter in which she wrote
(Lev. 279) - Grew up - a fine sturdy lad Love sports
- ~~another~~ ^{person} ~~at~~ ^{was} ~~born~~ ^{born} a few years after 1931 -
They named him 123.
When war 1948 broke out - 1931 joined the
Israeli forces and was killed in battle (age - 21)
123 was immediately enlisted as a private gavvy Walter Shul
Rebecca herself describes the last time she saw 123 (Lev. 279)

123 - was killed at the age of 17 - 4 w. after ¹⁹³⁶ (6
Crushed - undignified - I write to them sons - showed in
photographs
- gave me ^{2, 1943 1944} -
9/ Not a virgin - latent drama (Motherhood - Fatherhood -
Cruelty - Fate told - which lead Sanders Thomas
to life - and inspire men to their work and
their best



Sunday Morning Service

10:30 o'clock

RABBI SILVER

will speak on

"Life With Mother"

ON THE OCCASION OF THE SPECIAL SISTERHOOD SERVICE

Friday Evening Services
5:30 to 6:10

Saturday Morning Services
11:15 to 12:00

Shabuot **and** **Confirmation Service**

Wednesday Morning, May 16, 1956

9:30 o'clock

Organist and Choir Director
A. R. WILLARD

Editor
SOPHIA LEVINE

A. M. Luntz President
L. W. Neumark Vice-President
A. J. Kane Treasurer

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SWetbriar 1-7755

MUSIC FOR SUNDAY

Organ
1st Sonata. I Allegro Borowski
A Springtime Sketch Brewer
Invocation (Sh'ma Yisroel) Castelnuovo-Tedesco
Opening Psalm—Mah Tov Spicker
Bor'chu (Congregational) Sulzer
Sh'ma-Boruch (Congregational) Traditional
Mi Chomocho (Congregational) Sulzer
Kedusha Grimm
Silent Devotion—May the Words Rogers
Miss Wischmeyer - Mr. Cammock
Before the Address
A Woman of Valor Adler
Quartette and Choir
Olenu—Va-anachnu Goldstein

HEBREW CLASS GRADUATION

On Saturday morning, May 12, at 11:00 o'clock five boys and girls of the Special Hebrew Department will be graduated. These students have attended special Hebrew classes in our religious school from the third through the ninth grades.

The following are members of the graduating class:

J. SHELDON ARTZ
NORMAN PHILIP BRESKY
BARBARA LOUISE CAGEN
ELAINE BARBARA TASK
LARRY HOFFMAN TUCKER

Markus, Mrs. William Morse, Mrs. Gerald Silberbach and Mrs. Sidney Weitz will present flowers to all mothers in attendance at the service.

All members of The Temple and their families are cordially invited to attend this lovely service.

BLOOD BANK

Members of The Temple have asked for a Blood Bank and the only way we can have it is if YOU support it.

On Tuesday, May 15, from 1:00 P.M. to 7:00 P.M. the blood mobile will be at Moreland School, Van Aken Blvd. and Lee Road.

Please call your chairman and make an appointment to become a blood donor and give credit to The Temple.

Blood Bank Chairman
Mrs. Maurice Weiskopf
YE 2-9028

Chairman for The Men's Club
Dr. Edward Siegler
EV 2-2695

Chairmen for The Mr. and Mrs. Club
Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Levy
EV 2-4662

Chairman for The Alumni Association
Arlyne Adelstein
YE 2-7466

Temple Memorial Book

The name of
GERTRUDE MILLER KAHN
has been lovingly inscribed in The Temple Memorial Book by her husband, Lester, her daughter, Mrs. Janeth Serbin, and her son, Robert.

the service.

Families of the Confirmands are requested to meet the Confirmands in Mahler Hall at the close of the service.

SHABUOT

"The Feast of Weeks"
May 16

The observance of a major Jewish festival known as Shabuot, Hebrew for "Weeks", begins at sundown, Tuesday, May 15.

Ordained in Scripture as a time to give thanks for the beginning of the summer harvest, the holiday's name is derived from the fact that it occurs seven weeks after Passover, the beginning of Spring. The holiday is also known as the Festival of the First Fruits and Pentecost, a reference to the fifty-day interval between Passover and Pentecost.

According to the Jewish tradition, the revelation on Mt. Sinai took place on Shabuot and the giving of the Ten Commandments. Since on the first Shabuot, the Israelites avowed the need for moral dedication in their living, Liberal Judaism has introduced the ceremony of Confirmation into its Temples on this holiday. Confirmands are those who have completed their elementary religious education and ceremonially are welcomed into spiritual maturity by rabbi and congregation.

In Memoriam

The Temple notes with deep sorrow the passing of

PAULINE SCHULHOF
MARION RUTH COHEN

and extends heartfelt sympathies to the members of their bereaved families.