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The Originality of the Prophets, 1961.

SUNDAY MORNING SERVICE

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THE ORIGINALITY OF THE PROPHETS

You may recall that in the first lecture of the series of the New Frontiers I spoke of the spirituality of Moses. Moses was the first among the titans of the human spirit, to draw aside the dark curtains and open up new vistas for the spiritual life of man. He taught man the unity of God, how to worship God -- not through images or idols but through the moral life. It was Moses who set the moral life as the very core of religion. And by a Covenant which he made between Israel and YHWH () having first made of Israel a people, then an 'Am Kadosh, a holy people, designated for it the task of becoming a (), a kingdom of priests, reserved for himself for all future time the ethics and the teachings which he gave them, which we find in the debarim, the "Words" which God spoke to Moses. Moses then was the pioneer, the path-finder, a genius of extraordinary originality.

This morning I want to speak to you about the "Originality of the Prophets", the prophets who followed Moses much later, who were also men of great originality of a different kind. The originality of the prophets was not of, what you might call, dedicated discipleship. Their originality consisted, not in discovering new truths, but in proclaiming to unwilling ears, to the ages which did back-slide to the original Torah of Moses, the old truths, in summoning generations of men, sinful and corrupt, to the ways of justice and righteousness which had been marked out for them. These prophets spoke with deep passion and with rare eloquence of the ancient

code and of the holy Covenant which had been made, which the people seemingly had forgotten. And there had never been men like unto them before or since -- for courage, for dedication, for self-sacrifice.

Now, there have been scholars who trace the beginnings of spiritual Judaism to the great literary prophets -- Amos, Hosea, Micah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and the others who lived during the eighth through the sixth centuries before the Common Era. Prior to that time, these men maintained, the religion of Israel was little different from the religions of all of its heathen neighbors. The Canaanites had their Baal, the Moabites had their Chemosh and the Israelites had their YHWH (). It was those literary prophets who introduced new concepts of religion and ethics to the world, who pointed out radical new departures in ways of thinking about God and of worshipping Him and nothing can be further from the truth. The prophets of Israel, from Amos down, including even the earlier non-literary prophets -- those who had not left their preachings in writing -- prophets like Samuel, Nathan, Gad and Elijah. These prophets did not create the religion of Israel. They would have been the last to make such a claim. These men never conceived of themselves as innovators or originators of the ideas which they proclaimed to the people. They regarded themselves as having been sent to remind the people of what they had forgotten, to recall them to a faith and a way of life which their ancestors had chosen to adopt, but which their descendants had chosen to ignore.

These prophets came to alert the people to their corruption, their backsliding, and to warn them of the retribution which was sure to

follow. The prophet was, in very truth, what he was called in the Bible, the
-- "he who reproveth in the gates". He summoned
the nation to repentance for sins committed against moral laws which were
very well known to them. Jeremiah clearly defined the mission of the prophet.
"Obey My voice and I will be your God". When God brought the people of
Israel out of Egypt, he gave them this command "Obey My voice and I will be
your God". But they did not obey. Whereupon God sent them time and again
His servants, the prophets. Yet they did not listen to them and did not obey
the voice of God. They did not accept discipline ().
The people consistently refused to ~~follow~~ take correction (),
so that the function of the prophet was to bring , correction,
discipline, to sound a call to repentance: "Nevertheless they were dis-
obedient and rebelled against Thee and cast Thy law behind their backs
and killed ~~xxxxx~~ Thy prophets, who had warned them in order to turn them
back to Thee". The prophets spoke with the authority of divine inspiration
as the restorers of the true and ancient faith to a generation which had
ignored it or forgotten it.

The prophet Micah defined his calling in this way: "But as for
me, I am filled with power, with the Spirit of YHWH, ()
with justice and might, to declare to Jacob his transgression and to Israel
his sin". And he reminds the people that God had already told them what
is good and what he requires of them. He had already told them to do
justice, to love kindness, to walk in probity -- or, as it is translated,
to walk humbly with Him.

Now what were these sins and transgressions which the prophets condemned? Not one which is not already itemized in the great "Words" -- in the debarim of the original Torah of Moses. The prophets from Samuel down held up to condemnation the worship of other gods, the making of images and the indecent practices which were connected with the various fertility cults such as sacred prostitution, the burnt-offering of children and all forms of witch-craft and sorcery. The prophets denounced the perversion of justice, the taking of bribes, the shedding of innocent blood, the oppression of the poor, the orphan and the widow, the over-reaching and the covetousness of the rich, the resorting to "the wicked scales and the bag of deceitful weights" and the swearing, lying, killing, stealing and committing adultery". It is these practices and idolatries which the prophets condemned by various forms of condemnation, by various terms of contempt, especially by the term , "abominable", "despicable", which was the utmost in condemnation. There were no new ethical demands which the prophets made upon the people and none are to be found in their prophecies. They were pleading with their people to return -- as Jeremiah put it " to return to the ancient paths of the good way, and walk in it, and find rest for your souls".

These prophets reminded the people that the Torah which their ancestors had received in the wilderness after they left Egypt at Sina -- that that Torah, that original Torah of Moses, said nothing about sacrifices and nothing about sanctuaries. Neither Jerusalem, which was the capital later on of the kingdom of Juda, nor Bethel or Dan, which were sanctuaries

in the northern kingdom of Israel~~x~~ -- none of these places, they maintained, was at all important for the true worship of YHWH, of (). They are not in themselves the dwelling place of () nor are they the exclusive places of His revelation. "Seek YHWH and live". "Do not seek Bethel and do not enter into Gilgal or cross over to Beer-sheba into ancient sanctuaries -- don't go there to seek ~~xxx~~ the word of God" Seek God within you, in your souls". "Amend your ways and your doings". "Do not trust in these deceptive words: "This is the temple of YHWH, the temple of YHWH, the temple of YHWH". People believed that as long as the temple of () stood in Jerusalem, nothing could happen to them because God dwelt there -- God would not permit his temple to be destroyed or his holy city to be laid in ruins. The prophets warned the people against that notion. The original Torah of Moses said nothing about sanctuaries and nothing about sacrifices. And the prophets spoke in the name of a religion long established, whose authority had been largely flouted by the people of their day to their own hurt. And the teachings of these prophets, for all their superb emphasis and elaboration and application, did not represent any new theological or ethical development in the religion of Israel. The later Rabbis of the Talmud, the later Rabbis declared that had not Israel sinned, only the five books of Moses and the book of Joshua would have been given unto them. The prophetic books would not have been necessary because God sent the prophets only in his anger because the people of Israel would not obey the laws of the Torah.

Now, there was a great deal that was new in their preaching, but first of all was the extraordinary earnestness and passionate intensity with which they uttered their messages. Theirs was a spiritual and ethical fervor utterly unknown in the ancient world. You don't find it anywhere. You don't find it in the eighth or the sixth century before the Common Era among the Greeks or the Egyptians, the Babylonians or the Assyrians -- moral preachers and teachers arising, who spoke with such earnestness and passion in defense of the moral law, in defense of justice of righteousness, of the poor, in defense of the widow and the orphan. You don't find it anywhere in the ancient world.

What was new then in the preachings of these prophets of ancient Israel? The extraordinary earnestness and passionate intensity with which they uttered their messages. Theirs was a spiritual and ethical fervor utterly unknown in the ancient world. They re-stated the centuries-old principles of their faith and the commitments of their people under the covenant with UHVH with a vividness, and a glow of forthrightness which made them sound both new and at the same time disturbingly reminiscent to a generation which had grown hard of heart, "whose ears were heavy and whose eyes were shut". In their re-statements they did not add anything new to the original Torah of Moses but they plumbed its depth, they applied it directly and specifically to the evils, to the sins of their day. They elaborated upon it, often in the face of danger and death. At times they spoke in words of wrath, often pain -- at other times in pity and tender pleading. The prophets were the great and inspired preachers of ancient Israel.

There was something else that was new and original with the prophets. What was substantially new in their preaching concerned the future, the End of Days -- the -- beyond the present. They projected a vision of a distant time when all the nations of the earth would acknowledge YHWH as their God and would live by His law. They saw men and nations reconciled at last in a universal brotherhood of peace. They entertained the hope that Israel, first-born to the idea of the one universal spiritual God, might serve as "a light to the nations" guiding them to the happy consummation of a free, just, and united world community (Is. 2.2-4). This is especially true of those prophets who lived in the desperate years of the sixth century who preached comfort and hope and who pointed to new horizons to their broken, defeated, exiled and scattered people.

In the original Torah of Moses there is no reference to , to the End of Days, to the kingdom of the future. There is no reference to a world disarmament and universal peace. One finds in the "Words" of Moses deep concern for the protection of the stranger - ~~✕~~ "You love shall ~~be~~ the stranger". But it remained for these literary prophets of the later centuries to draw the ultimate implications of the ideal of human brotherhood in terms of universal disarmament and a peaceful society of nations founded upon law. It required centuries of living as a nation among nations -- which had not yet been done in the days of Moses -- it required centuries of living as a nation among nations for the ethical idea of a war-less, international community to ripen among the spiritual

leaders of Israel. The generation of Moses was as yet far removed from that experience and from that vision. That high plateau, that promontory from which this wider panorama of mankind could be seen had not yet been reached. It remained for the prophets to say: "And it shall come to pass in the end of days () That the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow unto it. And many peoples shall go up and say: "Come ye, and let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord and to the house of the God of Jacob; And he will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths. For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem, () ()".

This vision of an international community is sort of a League of Nations, all turning to Zion in order to learn the moral law of God, in order to learn how they could live together in peace. That vision first was proclaimed to mankind by the prophets. And as a result of this organization of international society of nations living under the moral law of God, "He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide for many peoples: And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war any more."

It is of interest to note that the original Torah of Moses was directed to the Jewish people. The vision of the prophets reached beyond the boundaries of the one people. It reached out to the nations of the world.

And the prophets, as you heard read this morning from the first chapter of Jeremiah, who was perhaps the greatest of the prophets, (" to ")
"I have sent ~~the~~ as a prophet for the nation" They spoke ~~for~~ all of the peoples of mankind, not only to the Jewish people.

The original Torah of Moses, The Commandments, and all of the ethical teachings appended thereto was, of course, often ignored and flouted by the people. It could not be otherwise. People were unprepared for it, all that it called for, perhaps never would be fully prepared for it. We are not yet really prepared for it ourselves today. Its total rejection of all nature-worship, all polytheism, all forms of idolatry, its austere, non-ritualistic worship of the One unseen and un-imaged Adonai, its high ethical demands and its summons to total and exclusive dedication, was the most daring upward leap yet made in the spiritual life of mankind. Here man was suddenly challenged to draw himself up to his full height as a child of God. But unfortunately the downward drag of the old ways of life, the old beliefs, the old customs were always there and would always be there, the ingrained customs, the pressures and allurements of the environment which people lived in which pushed the ideals, frequently brutally, aside.

The Torah of Moses had to do battle for survival but it always found stout hearts to defend it, among the stoutest ~~and~~ the bravest of these prophets of Israel.

The story of the religion of Moses is the story of a struggle -- at times uneven and apparently dimmed and hopeless -- the struggle to preserve itself pure from dilution and secure from total submergence. And

often times Kings and nobles, priests and the common people would conspire to dilute it and submerge it. They would prefer the ways of the heathen -- Egypt, Canaan, Syria, Babylon and other neighbors -- "Let us be like all the nations, like the families of the earth, and worship wood and stone". At times the people would blame all their misfortunes on the intrusion of Adonyai and His Torah into their lives. "As for the word which you have spoken to us in the name of Adonyai, we will not listen to you but we will do everything that we have vowed: burn incense to the Queen of Heaven, pour out libations to her as we did, both we and our fathers, our kings and our princes, in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem, for then we had plenty of good and we prospered and saw no evil. But since we left burning incense to the Queen of Heaven and pouring out libations to her, we have ~~xxxxxx~~ lost everything and have been consumed by the sword and by famine." The people would persecute the prophets who confronted them with the demands of the original Torah. Some they would slay, but there would ~~be~~ always be faithful ones, sometimes only a few in number, who took the Torah of Moses very much to heart -- lived by it and fought for it. There were those who died for it.

When the tribes of Israel left Egypt in the thirteenth century before the Common Era and returned to Canaan and settled down to an agricultural life, the threat to the faith of Moses and His Torah which he had received at Sinai increased greatly. There were in Canaan Jews -- Hebrews -- who had not gone down to Egypt, who remained there while the rest of the people were in Egypt. These fellow Hebrews who who had not

gone down to Egypt but had remained in Canaan, had, through the centuries become largely assimilated with the other settlers of the country, generally designated as Canaanites, many of whom belonged to the same Semitic stock as did the Hebrews, spoke the same language. And the way of life of these Hebrews and their religious practices came to differ very little from the people about them with whom they freely inter-married, although they did not in some way amalgamate with them completely but remained aware of their own ancestral tribal God, the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. It is with these, more or less, assimilated Israelites, who did not participate in the migration to Egypt, that the staunch Yahvist protagonists who entered the country with Joshua, who had received the Torah from Moses, who had made the covenant with Adonai -- these staunch Yahvists had their greatest difficulties. The YHWH faith of Moses was not known to them. They had not entered into the new covenant as did those who had stood with Moses at Sinai.

But even those who came in with Joshua, the invading Israelites who had come from Egypt, even they could not fully resist the cultural and religious influences of the Canaanites even though they were the conquerors. In the course of time they, too, appropriated many of the Canaanitish forms of worship -- for example: The Israelites took over from the Canaanites the great agricultural festivals which were connected, naturally, with the seasons of the year in Palestine. Now the rituals which were connected with these festivals and which were in the hands of an elaborate priesthood -- an institution which was utterly alien to the religion which Moses taught -- these rituals were often gross and obscene.

Many Israelites copied them and while not abandoning Adonyai and His worship, they introduced forms also of Baal worship and Ashera worship into the worship of Adonyai. What they called religious syncretism -- that is, religious compromise -- was a common practice in the ancient world, as it is in the modern world, and this stultifying syncretism persisted in varying degrees among the masses of the ruling circles and even the religious leaders throughout the period of the conquest and settlement of Canaan and later on during the period of the kingdoms until their final destruction -- the destruction of the kingdom of Israel in 721 before the Common Era and the destruction of the kingdom of Judah in 586 before the Common Era.

Now with the establishment of the Kingdom in the year one thousand and its growing contact by way of trade, commerce and diplomacy with the neighboring peoples and empires -- a process which began with the defeat of the Philistines -- foreign gods and their cults were steadily introduced, cults of the Phoenician deities, Babylonian and Assyrian and Egyptian, but this did not happen during the reign of King David who was himself zealously devoted to YHWH and single-hearted in his worship of him. During his life-time and during the life-time of his predecessor, Saul, Yahvism was unchallenged in Israel, but a radical change occurred in the latter part of the reign of King Solomon. From then on, Yahvism entered upon periods of dilution and attenuation and assimilation. There were times, to use the words of the prophet, when as many as your cities are your gods, O Judah". The trend towards

religious assimilation was constant and massive and the universal example of the nations round about them was well nigh irresistible. But there were always those who would remain loyal to the old tradition of Moses and his original Torah, who resisted assimilation and syncretism with fierce determination. In every age there were YHVH champions -- prophets -- like Samuel, Nathan Ahijah, Elijah, Elisha, Michaiah ben Imla and later on the great literary prophets.

Thanks to these leaders, thanks to their labors and sacrifices, the original Torah of Moses was preserved. Thanks to their passionate advocacy, the heroic teachings of justice, and love and freedom, human dignity and equality before the law have echoed down the ages. The words of these prophets challenged every tyrant and oppressor of mankind to this day. They inspired the idealists and the revolutionists in all parts of the world to fight for the rights of man and for the building of the good society. Their vision of a redeemed mankind, turning from hate to brotherhood, from war to the pursuits of peace, has never been dimmed and it burns as bright today as in the ages of the past -- although men in many parts of the world choose to turn away from the light, to shut their eyes to it.

And if ever our world, which is still so steeped in barbarism, in hate and exploitation, in bigotry, in war and in the preparation for war -- the very things against which the prophets uttered their bitter words of invective and condemnation -- if ever our world is to be saved

from the abyss, it will only be by men and women who remain faithful to the teachings of these prophets, who follow through their spirits unafraid, who raise their voices fearlessly against those who add house to house and field to field until there is no room to live in -- who cry in the faces of the poor, who shed innocent blood -- if the world is to be free, it will be because in our day there will be men and women who will speak up as true and faithful disciples of these prophets.

I have just come back from a part of the world -- a beautiful part of the world -- where the good Lord has been so kind to His people and given them gracious and beautiful land, rich in everything that man would require -- scenic grandeur, wealth and treasures of earth, mines and fields. Everything is beautiful but man is ugly. So much of poverty and misery, degradation everywhere. On the one hand a little group of people living in luxury, building themselves mansions -- on the other hand hill-sides terraced up to their very tops with thousands of hovels, huts, miserable dwelling places built out of gasoline cans, tin cans -- unspeakable misery and poverty.

I visited a country -- one of the richest countries in the world -- the second largest oil-producing country in the world -- untold wealth. We visited the capital city and a section of it looked like a little Paris -- Champs Elysee, beautiful buildings, and offices and country clubs the like of which I have not seen anywhere in the United States. You look up and about you and see masses of the people living in conditions of unspeakable degradation -- a government corrupt,

Do you wonder why you hear today such rumblings from that part of the world? such ominous threats and revolution and upheavals? How else will these people come into their own? Either there will rise among them disciples of the prophets who will call for justice, justice or the masses of the people will rise in their anger and desperation to break off their shackles and there will be blood-shed -- oceans of it.

These prophets of Israel summed it up for all time for all mankind "Thou hast been told, O Man, what is good and what the Lord doth require of thee -- only to do justice, to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God.

Amen.



ISAIAH'S "VISION OF PEACE"
(Isaiah, Chapter 2, Verses 2-4)

*Jan 4/1961
Glad & Thine.*

And it shall come to pass in the end of days,
That the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established
as the top of the mountains,
And shall be exalted above the hills;
And all nations shall flow unto it.
And many peoples shall go and say:
"Come ye, and let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord,
To the house of the God of Jacob;
And he will teach us of His ways,
And we will walk in His paths."
For out of Zion shall go forth the law,
And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.
And He shall judge between the nations,
And shall decide for many peoples;
And they shall beat their swords into plowshares,
And their spears into pruning-hooks;
Nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
Neither shall they learn war any more.

1. Originality of Moses - The first to draw ^{sermon 9/13} ~~used~~ ^{the} dark curtains - ① Original ② Images ③ Set the moral life at very core of religion

① By a Covenant with God - making Israel a people - and His people - God's nation -

2. ~~the~~ He was pioneer, pathfinder - A genius

3. Extraordinary originality -

4. The Prophets, who followed him much later -

were also remarkable men; great originality but a different kind - The originality of discipleship
their originality consisted - not in ^{so much} discovering new truth - as in ^{to unwillingly see} proclaiming in a back slide ^{age} the old truths - in renewing ~~the~~ generations, simple and corrupt, to the ways of justice and righteousness which had been marked out for them.

They spoke with ^{deep} passion and dispassion - as the spokesmen of the ^{new} Code & the Covenant.

And there had never been men like unto them before a race - for courage, for dedication for self-sacrifice.

There are those who trace the beginnings of spiritual Judaism to the ^{great} literary prophets of the eighth through the sixth centuries B.C. ^{Amos etc.} Prior to that time, they maintain, the religion of Israel was little different from the religions of ^{all its} ~~their~~ heathen neighbors. The Canaanites had their Baal, the Moabites their Chemosh, the Israelites had their YHWH. It was the literary prophets who introduced new concepts of religion and ethics, ^{to the world} radical new departures in ways of thinking about God and of worshipping Him. (There are even those who maintain that Judaism actually began with the reformation of Josiah in 621 B.C.)

Nothing can be further from the truth! The prophets of Israel from Amos down, including even the earlier non-literary prophets, Samuel, Nathan, Gad and Elijah, did not create the religion of Israel. They would have been the last to make such a claim. ^{these men} ~~They~~ never conceived of themselves as innovators or originators of the ideas which they proclaimed to the people. They regarded themselves as having been sent to remind the people of what they had forgotten, to recall them to a faith and a way of life which their ancestors had chosen to adopt but which their descendants had chosen to ignore.

They came to alert the people to ^{their} ~~the taint and~~ corruption ^{and backsliding} ~~of their age~~, and to warn them of the retribution which was sure to follow. The prophet was, in very truth, the ^{נביא} ~~נביא~~ -- "he who reproveth in the gates", (Is. 29.21). He summoned the nation to repentance, ~~at times in unmeasured invectives~~, for sins committed against moral laws which were very well known to them. Jeremiah clearly defined the mission of the prophet. When God brought the people of Israel out of Egypt, He gave them this command: "Obey My voice and I will be your God". But they did not obey. Whereupon God sent them time and again His servants, the prophets. Yet they did not listen to them and did not obey the voice of God. They did not accept discipline (^{נביא} ~~נביא~~ Jer. ⁷ ~~7~~. 21-28). The people consistently

the term ~~Abominable~~ -- "abominable", "despicable", which was the utmost in condemnation. An itemized list of them is given in the indictment of King Manasseh, who was regarded as the most wicked of all the evil kings of Judah: 1) He rebuilt the High Places and erected altars for Baal and made an Asherah. He worshipped all the hosts of heaven and built altars to them, even in the House of YHVH, and he placed a graven image of Asherah there. 2) He burnt his son as an offering. 3) He practiced soothsaying and augury and dealt with mediums and wizards. 4) He shed much innocent blood. These were the abominations, the evils which he did which provoked YHVH to anger (II K. Chap. 21).

These were no new ethical demands which the prophets made upon the people -- and ~~no others~~ ^{none} are to be found in their prophecies. They were pleading with their people to return "to the ancient paths, where the good way is, and walk in it, and find rest for your souls" (Jer. 6.16).

The prophets reminded the people that the Torah which their ancestors ^{had} received in the wilderness after they left Egypt said nothing about sacrifices and sanctuaries. Neither Jerusalem in ^{Judea} the South, nor Bethel or Dan in ^{Israel} the North, they maintained, was important for the true worship of YHVH. They ^{are} ~~did not contain~~ ^{the dwelling place of} YHVH nor are they the exclusive places of His revelation. "Seek YHVH and live". "Do not seek Bethel and do not enter into Gilgal or cross over to Beer-sheba" (Amos 5.4-6) "Amend your ways and your doings" "Do not trust in these deceptive words: "This is the temple of YHVH, the temple of YHVH, the temple of YHVH" (Jer. 7.3-4).

The prophets spoke in the name of a religion long established, ~~one of high spiritual and ethical claim and content~~ ^{which was}, whose authority had been largely flouted by the people of their day to their own hurt. Their teachings, for all their superb emphasis, elaboration and application, ^{did} not represent any new theological or ethical development in the religion of Israel. Had not Israel sinned, declared one of the Rabbis of later time, only the Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua would

a Kingdom, the Future to
world / an ~~an~~ ~~an~~

In the original Torah of Moses there is no reference to disarmament ~~on~~ universal peace. One finds in the "Words" deep concern for the protection of the stranger -- "You shall love the stranger". But it remained for the literary prophets of the 8th c. onward to draw the ultimate implications of the idea of human brotherhood in terms of universal disarmament and of a peaceful society of nations founded upon law. It ~~is~~ required centuries of living as a nation among nations for the ethical idea of a war-less, international community to ripen among the spiritual leaders of Israel. The generation of Moses was as yet far removed from that experience and from that vision. The ^{high plateau} ~~promontory~~ from which this wider panorama of mankind could be seen had not yet been reached. (Note)

The original Torah of Moses was often ignored or flouted. It could not be otherwise. Men were unprepared for what it called for, perhaps never would be fully prepared. Its total rejection of all polytheistic nature-worship and all forms of idolatry, its austere, non-ritualistic worship of the One unseen and un-imaged YHVH, its high ethical demands and its summons to total dedication, was the most daring ^{upward} leap yet made in the spiritual ^{light} ~~up-reaching~~ of mankind. Here man was suddenly challenged to draw himself up to his full height. But ^{unfortunately} the downward drag of the old ways of life and beliefs ^{was} ~~there~~ ^{also} and would always be there, the ^{unconquerable} ~~immortal~~ customs and the pressures and allurements ^{the} of environment which pushed the ideal ^{brutally} ~~aside~~.

The Torah of Moses ^{had} ~~would have~~ to do battle for survival and victory, but it ~~would~~ always ^{find} ~~have~~ stout ^{hearts} ~~champions~~ to defend it.

The story of the religion of Moses is the story of a struggle -- at times uneven, and ^{apparently} ~~seemingly~~ hopeless -- to preserve itself from dilution and ^{total} ~~submergence~~. Kings, nobles, priests and common people would often conspire to ^{deliberate or submerge the faith} ~~do just that~~. They would prefer the way of the heathen -- Egypt, Canaan, Syria, Babylon, other neighbors -- "Let us be like all the nations, like the families of the earth and worship wood and stone". At times the people would blame all their misfortunes on the intrusion of YHVH and his Torah into their lives "As for the word which you have spoken to us

in the name of YHVH, we will not listen to you but we will do everything that we have vowed: burn incense to the Queen of Heaven and pour out libations to her as we did, both we and our fathers, our kings and our princes, in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem, for then we had plenty of good and ^{we} prospered and saw no evil. But since we ~~left~~ burning incense to the Queen of Heaven and pouring out libations to her, we have lacked everything and have been consumed by the sword and by famine." ^{The people} ~~They~~ would persecute the prophets who confronted them with the demands of the original Torah. Some they would slay. ~~"They made their hearts like adamant lest they should hear the Torah and the Words which YHVH of Hosts had sent by His Spirit through the former prophets"~~. But there ^{were} ~~would~~ always be the faithful ones, sometimes only a few in number, who took the Torah of Moses very much to heart -- lived by it, ^{and} fought for it. There were those who ~~would~~ ^d die for it.

When the tribes ^{of Israel} which had sojourned in Egypt returned to Canaan ^{in the 13th C.} and settled down to an agricultural life, the threat to the faith of Moses and his Torah increased greatly. ^{fellow Hebrews} Those who had not gone down to Egypt, but had remained in Canaan, had, through the centuries become largely assimilated with other settlers of the country -- generally designated as Canaanites, many of whom belonged to the same Semitic stock as did the Hebrews and shared the same speech. ^{of these Hebrews} Their way of life and their religious practices came to differ very ^{little} ~~greatly~~ from the peoples about them with whom they freely inter-married, although they did not amalgamate with them completely but remained aware of their own tribal distinctiveness and their own patron deity whom their ancestors had worshipped. It is with these more or less assimilated Israelites, who had not participated in the migration to Egypt, that the staunch Yahvist protagonists, who had entered the country with Joshua, had their greatest difficulties. The YHVH faith of Moses was not known to them. They had not entered into ^{the} a new covenant with YHVH as did those who had stood with Moses at Sinai.

But even many of the invading Israelites ^{who had come} ~~coming~~ from Egypt, could not ^{fully} ~~long~~ resist ^{the} ~~Canaanitish~~ cultural and religious influences, even though they were the conquerors. In the course of time they, too, appropriated ^{many} forms of Canaanitish worship. ^{For example} Israel took over from the Canaanites the great agricultural festivals which were connected with the seasons of the year in Palestine. The ~~native cults and rituals~~ ^{which were in connection with these festivals and} which were ^{which was utterly} the hands of an elaborate priesthood, and institution alien to the religion which Moses taught, were often gross, cruel and obscene. Many Israelites copied them and while not abandoning YHWH and His worship, they introduced forms of Baal and Ashera worship into YHWH's. Under ~~Canaanitish influence, priest-craft developed in Israel.~~ Religious syncretism or compromise was a common practice in the ancient world, as it is in the modern world. "^{ed} ~~They feared YHWH but also serve their own~~ ^d ~~gods~~" ^{who} is the way the religious amalgum of the people ~~were~~ were imported into Samaria at a much later date is described. This stultifying syncretism, ~~which was in doctrine~~ a rejection of ~~much of the Torah of Moses,~~ persisted in varying degrees among the masses, the ruling circles and even the religious leaders throughout the period of the ^{conquest and settlement} ~~Judges~~ and in both kingdoms until their final destruction. ^{in the 8th and 6th c} ^{in the 10th c -}

With the establishment ~~and expansion~~ of the ~~United~~ Kingdom and its growing contact by way of trade, commerce and diplomacy with neighboring peoples and empires, — a process which began with the defeat of the Philistines, foreign gods and their cults were steadily introduced. King David himself was zealously devoted to YHWH and single-hearted in his worship of Him. During his life-time Yahvism was unchallenged in Israel even as it had been in the days of King Saul, but a radical change occurred in the latter part of the reign of King Solomon. From then on, Yahvism entered upon periods of dilution and attenuation. ^{as} There were times "when as many ^{as} your cities are your gods, O Judah". The trend towards religious ^{as in the Bible} ~~syncretism~~ was constant and massive and the universal example of the nations around them was well nigh irresistible.

THE TEMPLE

CLEVELAND, OHIO

January 8, 1961

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OF BOOKS AND BOOKSELLERS—FROM THE RABBIS' DESK

Rare books are expensive. A. S. W. Rosenbach, who died in 1952, was an internationally known bookseller and the man who more than any other contributed to the high cost of book collecting. It was not unusual for him to sell first folios and original manuscripts in six figure prices. Needless to say, his clientele was limited, if select.

Edwin Wolf 2nd and John Fleming have recently published Rosenbach's biography. He was an unusual man, but despite his vanity and his social pretension and his lack of conventional moral values, he was both highly successful and something of a scholar.

This brief comment is only by way of a review. The biography will have interest largely to those who are themselves bibliophiles and are at home in the recondite atmosphere of literary archives. Most will find that this biography tells us somewhat more about Rosenbach than we care to know, but the book is well written and it did suggest this note.

As you might imagine, I was particularly interested in Rosenbach as Jew. Rosenbach, himself, was not a practicing Jew in the conventional sense, but throughout his life he was affiliated with the venerable Mikveh Israel Congregation in Philadelphia to which his parents had belonged and he was intermittently interested in Jewish causes—especially those which were academic and involved learning and, of course, books. Rosenbach contributed largely to the American Jewish Historical Society, both as scholar and patron, and was for many years President of this early attempt to systemize research into American Jewish history.

The incident which pleased me most concerned Rosenbach's Bar Mitzvah.

SUNDAY MORNING SERVICE
January 8, 1961
10:30 o'clock

RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER
will speak on
"THE ORIGINALITY OF THE PROPHETS"
The second in a series of lectures on the
Spiritual Frontiers of Judaism

FRIDAY EVENING SERVICES
5:30 to 6:10

SATURDAY MORNING SERVICES
11:00 to 12:00

The year was 1889. The service which followed the Spanish liturgy must have been quite beautiful. Rosenbach was well and conscientiously trained and the day was obviously a success. That evening Mrs. Rosenbach invited close friends to the house for a reception. On the printed invitation the final line stated succinctly, "Presents not accepted".

Obviously the merchandising aspect of religious ceremonies was a problem then as now. I admire Mrs. Rosenbach's forthrightness. She saw to it that there was no rain of neckties and fountain pens which are put away for years until they are rewrapped and sent off on a repeat performance. She saw to it, in other words, that her son's Bar Mitzvah centered on a personal rather than commercial note. In so doing she taught her son a lesson. Friendship is not a matter of exchanging trifles. Friendship is evidenced by

consideration and loyalty and pleasure in another's achievements. Friendship is the spoken word and the proffered hand and the companionable smile. It is not a wrapped package and a hastily written card.

I am sure young Rosenbach received gifts from his immediate family. I do not decry all gifting, but as with all pleasures there is excess and there is moderation. Surely there is a vast difference between the love-wrapped, longed-for gift of a parent and the hastily-wrapped, pro forma gift of a neighbor or business acquaintance. I cannot but feel that many an occasion would be the richer were we to subscribe to our invitations Mrs. Rosenbach's statement "Presents not accepted".

Daniel Jeremy Silver

The Temple

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DANIEL JEREMY SILVER

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THIS SUNDAY

Mr. and Mrs. Lester H. Colbert will be hosts for the Social Hall coffee hour preceding the worship service. Mr. Colbert is a member of The Temple Board of Trustees. Coffee is served each Sunday from 9:30 to 10:20.

The flowers which will grace the pulpit are contributed in memory of Ralph Selig Fuhrer, by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Martin Fuhrer, his brother, Mr. Jack Fuhrer, and his grandmother, Mrs. Rieda W. Selig.

FOUNDATION FUND

The Foundation Fund of The Temple acknowledges with gratitude a generous bequest left to our congregation by the will of Mrs. Kittie S. Haber.

In Memoriam

The Temple notes with deep sorrow the passing of

SADIE GARSON

BEATRICE MYERS GOLDSTEIN

DR. HARRY A. LIPSON

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

THE TEMPLE MEN'S CLUB

MEN'S CLUB DAY

Sunday, January 15th

Everyone is invited

Buffet Breakfast 9:30 A.M. Social Hall
Talents of Men's Club members will be displayed

Services 10:30 A.M. The Temple
Members of the Men's Club will participate

Harry Fuchs, Cellist, the Cleveland Symphony
Orchestra, will play

Members of The Temple Men's Club who wish to display are asked to contact Stanley Morgenstern, SK 1-7590 or Stanley Kramer, SK 2-3137.

THE TEMPLE RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

ELEMENTARY PARENT-TEACHER MEETING

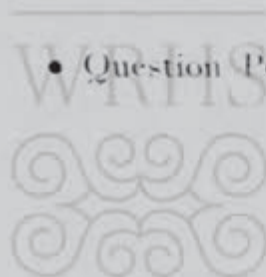
Wednesday, January 18, 1961

8:00 P.M.

- Parent-Teacher Conferences
- Rabbi Milton Matz will address the parents

• Question Period

• Social Hour



FAMILY DAY

THE TEMPLE



JANUARY 22, 1961

LUNCHEON AND
MATINEE AT THE PLAYHOUSE

THE TEMPLE WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

OPEN MEETING

Wednesday, January 11th
12:30 P.M.

Petite Luncheon
Social Hall



NILA MAGIDOFF

"A RUSSIAN DISCOVERS AMERICA"

Nila Magidoff has led many lives. She has been a clothes designer, a factory worker, an explorer, and a Merchant Marine Sailor Third Class. In addition, she is an author and was a noted Moscow newspaper woman. Mrs. Magidoff, wife of an N.B.C. Correspondent, met her husband in Moscow, where they were married in 1937. She came to America a week before Pearl Harbor.

As an American citizen, Mrs. Magidoff joined her husband in Moscow after the war. They were expelled in 1948 on charges of spying for the United States. However, in 1958 she was able to revisit Russia, where she was able to compare living conditions with what they had been a decade before.

Your admission to the luncheon
is your tax stamps

Nursery care available if The Temple
office is notified by January 6th

THE TEMPLE WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION — A TOUR

The Catholic Federation of Women's Clubs, United Church Women of Greater Cleveland, and the Women's Organization of the Jewish Community Federation are sponsoring a tour of houses of worship. \$2.00 covers all expenses, including luncheon and bus. The date is Thursday, January 19th. Luncheon will be served at The Temple. East side buses will leave from Fairmount Presbyterian Church and St. Paul's Episcopal Church at 9:30 A.M. For reservations, send your check to the Jewish Community Federation.

THE MR. AND MRS. CLUB

"AT HOME BY THE FIRESIDE"

Intimate Dinners with Mr. and Mrs. Club Members

Friday, January 20, 1961

7:30 P.M.

Featuring

Sabbath Dinner

Television viewing of the Presidential Inauguration

R.s.v.p. WY 1-9549
by January 10th

Chairmen: Shael and Marlene Siegel
Co-Chairmen: Marv and Joy Feldman
Harlan and Sandy Hertz

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DATES TO REMEMBER

Sunday, January 8 — Sunday Morning Services

Tuesday, January 10 — Temple Women's Association Tuesday Activities

Wednesday, January 11 — Temple Women's Association Open Meeting

Sunday, January 15 — Sunday Morning Services
Temple Men's Club Day

THE TEMPLE LIBRARY is open Tuesday through Friday 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Saturday and Sunday 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon.

THE TEMPLE MUSEUM will be open at the close of Sunday morning services in addition to all occasions of organization meetings. Arrangements to view the Museum by special appointment may be made through The Temple Office.

THE ISRAELI GIFT SHOP is open during all Tuesday Activities sessions. Selections can be made at all times from the display case in the lobby through The Temple Office.