



## Abba Hillel Silver Collection Digitization Project

Featuring collections from the Western Reserve Historical Society and  
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### **MS-4787: Abba Hillel Silver Papers, 1902-1989.**

Series VII: Personal Miscellaneous, 1908-1989, undated.

Sub-series E: Condolence Messages, 1949-1967, undated.

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Reel  
224

Box  
84

Folder  
130

Death of Abba Hillel Silver, memorial tributes, 1965-1966.

Ja n. 11, 1965

Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver  
University Circle  
Silver Park,  
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Rabbi:

I am Mrs Shuster here in Palo Alto. About six years ago when I visited Cleveland, I called your home and asked you if you would give a copy of your father's latest book, "Where Judaism Differed," to the Palo Alto Library?

You mentioned the Hoyer Library, ARCHIVES -- On my return I called the librarian of the Philosophy and Religion division, and asked if they would be willing to receive the book?

The answer was that they would be honored to get the book especially as a gift.

Now, 1965, I finally got ahold of the book and am reading it. The Author and the great work he has done for Humanity, and the dignity and honor he has brought to our nation and to Israel will always be remembered.

People Like Rabbi Abo Hillel Silver should live much longer.

His Book, "Where Judaism Differed," is a fine piece of work. I am on chapter x now, I am reading it carefully, and am enjoyng every bit of it.

I want to say that the book is onother Great offering of his to Judaism.

When I hear or read at times of the smear on Judaism by some ignorant half baked Rabbis, I realize still more the Grattness of your father, by his analizing in such dignified way in proving the Superiority of our Religeon, our scripts, our Scholars and all that belongs to us.



Here I am on the second page, but your Father meant so much to us, that I had to keep on talking.

הגביר הנכבד  
הרב דניאל הובר  
בית דין  
17/5/75

Now Dear Rabbi Daniel: The Hover Library doesn't have the book yet. If you wish to give them the book as a gift, then mail it to me. I am here Chairman of Jewish Education, for the Bnai Brith Group. It could be presented through the Chapter.

We usually invite the librarian to a meeting and by somewhat of a ceremony, we present the book, and receive thanks.

While members take their turn to reserve and borrow the book thru the library.

How is your mother? How many youngsters do you have?  
What is your brother Raphael doing? Does he live in Cleveland?  
I would love to receive the Temple Buletin.

WRHS

הרב דניאל הובר  
בית דין  
17/5/75



Dorothy H Shuster  
1101 Alma St  
Palo Alto, Calif.



January 14, 1965

Mrs. Dorothy H. Shuster  
1101 Alma Street  
Palo Alto, California

Dear Mrs. Shuster:

I am sending, under separate cover, a copy of  
Dr. Silver's book, "Where Judaism Differed" for  
your presentation to the Hoover Library.

With all good wishes, I remain

Sincerely yours,

DANIEL JEREMY SILVER

DJS:bd  
air mail



RABBI MALCOLM H. STERN  
300 EAST 71ST STREET, APT. 5R  
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10021

January 30, 1965

Dear Dan:

I'm aboard a jet bound for San Francisco;  
hence ~~of~~ the informality of this note.

Rabbi Isidore Meyer of the American  
Jewish Historical Society, 150 Fifth Ave.,  
New York 10011, has asked me to obtain  
from you a glossy photo of your father,  
a facsimile of his signature, and his  
full birth and death dates. These will  
be used with a tribute to be published  
in the next issue of the Quarterly. I believe  
that the tribute was written by Abe  
Feldman.

With grateful thanks for your kindness  
in sending these items to Rabbi Meyer,  
and with cordial regards from our  
house to yours, I am

Fraternally,

Malcolm.

mailed 2/2/65



February 2, 1965

Mr. Malcom Stern  
300 E. 71st Street  
Apartment 5R  
New York, New York 10021

Dear Malcom:

I have communicated with Rabbi Meyer. Appreciate your  
interest. I am enclosing a copy of a lecture on the  
Ecumenical Council.

Adele joins me in best wishes.



DANIEL JEREMY SILVER

DJS:mgm



# U A H C

## AMERICAN JUDAISM

838 FIFTH AVENUE • NEW YORK, N. Y. 10021 • REGENT 7-8200

March 26, 1965

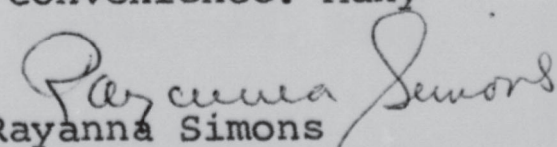
Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver  
Temple Tifereth Israel  
E. 105th St. & Ansel Rd.  
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Rabbi Silver:

Apologies for my vagueness over the telephone; we had been trying to get you for quite a while and when we finally did, you caught me somewhat unprepared. What we are planning is an anthology of material culled from past issues of AMERICAN JUDAISM Magazine; Mr. Kresh, our editor, has selected what he considers the very best things we have printed, and the material, which includes poetry, prose, and short stories will be published in an "American Judaism Magazine Anthology." We have received permission from writers and publishers to use everything we have asked for, including work by Rev. Carl Hermann Voss, Norman Cousins, Karl Jay Shapiro, Meyer Levin, Nat Hentoff, Dore Schary, Paul Goodman, Muriel Rukeyser, Arthur Kober, Charles Angoff, and many others. The piece written by your father is called "The Awesome Days," and it appeared in AMERICAN JUDAISM in our Rosh Ha Shono, 1961 issue. I am enclosing the article.

We would very much appreciate your permission to use it. The book will be edited by Mr. Kresh and published by Abelard-Schuman in the fall of 1965, and all the proceeds from it will go to the Union. There is a token fee for the use of material of \$35.00. In the event that you wish to reprint the material elsewhere, you are free to do so. We want to use it because it is beautiful and meaningful, and is, to us, a perfect statement of its kind.

Enclosed you will find the permission form. If we may use this piece, would you be kind enough to sign it and return to us at your earliest convenience. Many Thanks.

Sincerely,   
Rayanna Simons

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# AMERICAN JUDAISM

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## AMERICAN JUDAISM

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THE UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS IS THE PARENT BODY OF REFORM JUDAISM IN AMERICA

**COVER ART:** Rosh Ha-shono motifs—pomegranate, fruit of the season, supposed to contain 365 seeds; the shofar; three "tofs" signifying the Tekiah sounded thrice by the shofar; open scroll, for reading of the Torah; Yizkor, the Memorial Service. (Right): Yom Kippur—"From Sundown to Sundown." The word "Kol," for the introductory Day of Atonement prayer of "Kol Nidrei," evolves into the traditional symbol of the candelabra. Original art work by A. Raymond Katz.





## THE AWESOME DAYS

SIN AND REPENTANCE  
WOODCUT BY JACOB LANDAU

**T**HERE IS NO term in the Hebrew language for "salvation" in a sacramental, redemptive sense. The Bible knows of no such concept as "redemption from sin."

The central message of the Gospel deals with sin, grace, forgiveness and justification. The central message of Judaism deals with doing justly, loving mercy and walking in probity with God. Judaism's primary concern was to teach men not how sin came into the world, but how to avoid sin and how to repent of sin once having succumbed to it. All men are capable of sinning because all men are endowed with free will. Judaism has much to say on the subject of sin and its consequences, but little on Original Sin which is a non-moral concept of mythological origin.

Judaism did not caricature life into something fallen and tragic, in order to make room for some miraculous redemption. It rejected the dogma which in our day has

**by RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER**

*spiritual leader of The Temple in Cleveland for two decades, one of the great leaders of American Reform Judaism and an outstanding champion of Israel's causes. He is the author of numerous articles and books including Where Judaism Differs, in which he emphasizes that Judaism "is not constructed around any drama of redemption."*

been reformulated by theological existentialists that man is helpless to save himself, that his efforts at social and ethical improvement will not bring the Kingdom of God any nearer, and that the very thought of man cooperating in the establishment of the good society is presumptuous and but another evidence of man's besetting sin of pride. Judaism never confronted man with the fact of his total and irrevocable depravity. If man sinned, he may repent and be forgiven.

The initiative, however, must come from man, not from God. God's love will meet man more than half way, or to use the superb imagery of Judah Halevi, "When I go forth to seek Thee, I find Thee seeking me." The Psalmist, too, finds that "God is near unto all who call upon Him, who call upon Him in truth." But the call must first come from man, "Return to Me and I will return to you," says the Lord of Hosts.

That is why Teshubah—repentance, not redemption—holds such a prominent place in Jewish religious thought. In Greek philosophy, repentance is not held up as a virtue. In Judaism it is among the highest of virtues. No other religious literature is so eloquent on the subject of the nobility and efficacy of repentance. "In the place where the repentant sinner stands, even the righteous man who has never sinned cannot stand." The recurrent theme in our devotional literature is sin and repentance, not crime and punishment.

Repentance is not something mysterious. Man is not asked to be "born anew," to put off his old nature and put on a new nature. The way of repentance is fully defined in Judaism. There must be acts of restitution and reparation wherever possible. There must be sincere confession, not to man, but to oneself and to God. There must be a firm resolve not to sin again.

There is evil in the life of man and in society but they can be overcome by moral effort and exertion to a degree where man's life on earth may yield him a large measure of happiness and satisfaction.

During the Awesome Days, we are summoned to repent, to confront ourselves and our God. "Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel." We are admonished to judge our life and our actions in the clear, searching light of relentless self-examination.

We are asked to do this not that we might be humbled or abased. The aim of our religion is to inspire us, never to discourage or disparage us. Sin is basically the voluntary abandonment of status, self-degradation, descent to levels which are unworthy of man. Judaism challenges us to return to our high, human status, to live and act as if our lives were tremendously significant.

To do this we must be frank with ourselves and, from time to time, we must submit to a thoroughgoing self-appraisal, or we shall never advance spiritually. We never really come to know ourselves until we have thrust aside the heavy curtains of self-deception, self-exculpation, and self-approbation with which we so often enfold our lives.



It is not easy to judge ourselves honestly. Too many things stand in the way. In the first place, there are the deep grooves of the past. What we have been doing, customarily, seems right and proper in our eyes. Then there is self-esteem, the desire of man to think well of himself. We do not like to disapprove of ourselves. To acknowledge that we have been wrong seems like indicting ourselves. Man is very near to himself, and is his own best advocate. He is inclined to act, where he himself is involved, not as prosecutor or judge, but as counsel for the defense. It is easier to judge others than ourselves. But that is precisely what our religion asks us not to do.

We are asked not to judge other men at all or concern ourselves with their opinions about us, or with the standards and reactions of the social group of which we are a part. In a very direct and personal way, we are summoned to think of ourselves in relation to ourselves, to our own immortal souls, to our mission in life, and to our destiny on earth.

One of the difficulties in the way of self-examination is that every man lives on several levels and in all compartments. When we take stock of ourselves, it is usually to our most favored and creditable position, where we are at our best, that we direct our attention. We look in upon ourselves only where we are most presentable and least vulnerable, where we know ourselves to be least open to criticism. Other areas of our lives we choose to by-pass. But it is these very dark and unaired compartments of our lives which need to be unlocked, if they are to be made clean and fresh. We all have blind spots for things which we do not wish to see. Only by a determined act of spiritual introspection can we correct our imperfect vision so that where there was darkness there may be light.

Our religion wants us to be whole—Tamin—single hearted. It wants us to be one and the same on all levels of existence, in all our manifold relationships with our fellow men and with ourselves. Our religion claims nothing less than the whole domain of our being. It will not be satisfied with a mere part of us.

There are some people who are very loving and devoted to their families and on that level of existence they are truly exemplary. But the same people may be ruthless in their business life, conscienceless towards competitors, hard and thoughtless towards employees and co-workers, indifferent to the needs of others, and altogether uninterested in the progress of their community, or in the larger life of their country or humanity. Conversely, there are those who are, or at least appear to be, paragons of social-mindedness, affable, courteous and cooperative in the world outside, but within the private precincts of their own homes they show neither love nor thoughtfulness nor any understanding of what it takes to build a home and maintain it in dignity and beauty. The very same man may be a totally different person in different situations. Such a man is unpredictable, contradictory and, therefore, undependable. He is a bagful of pieces which have not been put together in any solid pattern.

It is true, of course, that every human being is an intricate network and very much involved. Complete unity and clean simplicity in one's own life and unfailing consistency in conduct are difficult to achieve. That would be perfection, and perfection belongs only to God. Our religion expects of us not to be perfect, but to be motivated towards perfection. "Man is wise only," declared the famous poet, Ibn Gabirol, "while in *search* of wisdom; when he imagines that he has attained it—he is a fool."

Tineius Rufus, the Roman governor of Judea who crushed the Bar Kochba revolution, once asked Rabbi Akiba, who was the spiritual father of that revolution: "If your God is so great, why did He not create man as perfect as He wanted him to be?" Akiba replied: "For the very reason that man's supreme opportunity in life and the very reason for his existence is to perfect himself." If we strive for wholeness and integrity, for what we might call organic moral unity, we are sure to win a large measure of simplicity, coordination, and harmony. Our lives will then come to have a clear pattern, a firm texture, and a standard quality.

In unifying our lives, in trying to achieve identity on all levels of existence, we must guard ourselves against the facile assumption that if we are a great success in one or another department of life, everything else does not matter. But everything else does matter greatly! Success in one field does not cover up or atone for moral failure in other fields. A man cannot say: "I am a very successful merchant or industrialist, or a great scientist or inventor, or a world-renowned artist, actor or sportsman, and therefore I can afford to be indifferent to the moral standards and disciplines and the ethical demands of society." Our religion recognizes no such special pleading and no exempted classes. On the contrary, the more successful and outstanding an individual is, the more is demanded of him, for he has been endowed with greater power, and power is a responsibility as well as a privilege.

Sometimes a nation comes to pride itself upon its material prosperity, its outstanding success in production, trade and agriculture, its teeming cities, and its vast wealth. There are citizens who assume that that is all that matters. Slums do not matter, or juvenile delinquency, or a mounting divorce rate, or loose morals, or intolerance, or low educational standards. But all these do urgently matter. If unchecked or uncorrected, they may topple the whole edifice of success upon which these citizens so fatuously rely. National confidence, when it is based on power and success, rests on shifting sands. When based on character, it is set upon solid rock.

In spiritual matters we must not reason from material strength and power, but from an humble acknowledgment of inadequacy. "We have sinned! We have transgressed! We have done perversely! We must do better!"

That is why the note of confession, contrition, and repentance is so often heard in the prayers of this season. To make a new beginning one must be very humble. In the long run, it is the very humble who inherit the earth.



THE WEDDING INVITATION, looking as if it had been dipped several times into a dish of quick-drying heavy cream, arrived in the same mail as the note. Type-written on a plain piece of white paper, the note had a quasi-military formality about it. It was from the bride-to-be's uncle, Endicott Brand, and it announced his intention of giving a dinner party at his Beacon Hill home for Robert Kurtz and Doodie Brand the night before their February wedding. Then, at the bottom of the paper, was Robert's suddenly familiar stark, upright handwriting: "Hope you can make it! Robert."

There was no problem about making it. I'd just have to leave New York for Boston a little earlier on the Saturday in question. The problem was did I want to make it. I had pretty much lost touch with Robert since I had come to New York to work, and the few times I had run into him over the last five years, I was forced to admit to myself that I found him fairly boring—in that special well-let's-examine-all-the-possibilities way an old friend who becomes a lawyer is boring. However, he was an old friend, albeit a summer one, and I felt duty-bound to attend every moment of what promised to be his greatest achievement so far.

It occurred to me, while driving over the February gray Wilbur Cross Parkway towards Boston, that as long as I had known Robert Kurtz, he had never been called any name but Robert—never Bob, nor Robbie, nor Bert—just Robert. I spent a long stretch of the remainder of that drive trying to figure out why.

Boston was going under in a sleet storm when I arrived. Snow had fallen earlier and the wet sleet hammering down on top of it like globs of gruel turned the downtown area into a raging sea of porridge. The driving was dangerous and by the time I reached Dave Eisen's apartment house, where I was staying for the week-end, we were already late for the party. Dave Eisen was the third member of the summer triumvirate from the Grove. Dave, like

by **BURTON BERNSTEIN**

*staff writer for The New Yorker, in which many of his stories on Jewish life in New England have appeared. The Boston Dinner Party will be included in his forthcoming book of short stories The Grove, being published this season by McGraw-Hill.*

Robert, had elected to stay in Boston after college but, unlike Robert, he had gone to work for his father. Robert was currently employed in his future father-in-law's ancient Boston law firm.

I left my bag at Dave's and together we dashed back to my car. We crept with the almost blind traffic towards Beacon Hill, leaving a symmetrical wake of slush when we could get moving. To make matters worse, many streets leading to Beacon Hill had become one-way since I was last in Boston and I was becoming very confused.

"When is Robert going to become mayor or governor or something and straighten out this damn city?" I asked Dave, once he had pointed out the latest secret formula for driving up the Hill on a slippery evening.

Dave lit a cigarette nervously. He never quite trusted machines, especially when the elements were working against them. "It won't be long after tomorrow," he said through rapid inhalations. "All that's left for him to do now is trap the Irish vote, and he's working on that with the maid he just hired. She's still got the dew of County Cork behind her ears."

With the motor and tires whining wildly, we ground slowly and unsurely up the Hill, traveling sideways most of the way. "You know," I said, tensely peering out the windshield, "I can believe it, knowing Robert. This wedding business and Doodie and all that perfectly fits the famous Kurtz timetable, doesn't it?"

"Ah, you remember," Dave said. We were almost at the summit of the Hill, so neither of us dared say anything more until we were positive we would make it. Dave involuntarily pushed against the dashboard, as if to help the car along by some human effort. Finally, we arrived at the top and I slipped the car up to what I thought was the curb and considered it parked.

"The Brand house is just over there," Dave said, pointing down a side street. He was breathing more easily now, walking through the heavy slush. "Everything's always worked out just so for that guy," he went on, "ever since he let us in on the schedule of his life back in the Grove. He planned out every step and by God it worked. I'll tell you something: I'm jealous of Robert. Not so much of him, really, but of how he gets whatever he goes after, Exeter, Harvard, the Law School, the Law Review, the Judge Advocate commission in the

Army, the proper Boston law firm, and now the perfect girl—Miss Governor's Wife of 1980. My God, it's right out of Marquand at his worst! Things like that aren't supposed to work out so smoothly for nice little boys from the Grove, but for him they do. I've never seen anything like it!"

"You're sounding bitter, Dave," I said teasingly.

Dave slipped slightly in the slush, but regained his balance with a graceless maneuver. "Yeah," he said, when he recovered, "you laugh because you live in New York and don't give a damn, but you should see it up close, like I do. And it's not just sour grapes, either."



## THE BOSTON

WE STOOD before the awesome front door of the Brand house. It was the sort of place I had spent my youth viewing in passing, without ever thinking or caring too much about what was going on inside—at least no more than I would care about what went on inside Martian dwellings. But rapping the brass knocker, I suddenly felt like a child being dared to play a trick-or-treat prank on the local police chief's abode. Dave was ill-at-ease himself in his dark, loose-hung way, as he stamped the sticky snow off his shoes. "Have you ever figured out why nobody—not even us—



May 24, 1965

Mrs. Rayanna Simons  
American Judaism  
838 Fifth Avenue  
New York, New York 10021

Dear Mrs. Simons:

I am pleased to grant you permission to use the article, "The Awesome Days", which was written by my father, in the anthology to be published by the Union. There is one proviso: It is to be published without the wood cut by Jacob Landau, which prefaced the article in the magazine. This cut mystified and displeased my father and I am sure that if he had been consulted he would have asked for it not to be used.

With all good wishes on your project, I remain,

DANIEL JEREMY SILVER

DJS:mgm



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C

# Commission on Jewish Education

Union of American Hebrew Congregations & Central Conference of American Rabbis

838 FIFTH AVENUE • NEW YORK, N. Y. 10021 • REGENT 7-8200

May 31, 1966.

Dr. Daniel Jeremy Silver, Rabbi  
The Temple  
University Circle and Silver Park  
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Dear Daniel:

I trust that all is well with you and yours.

One of my unofficial responsibilities here at the Union is to follow the Yiddish press and to note any news items that affect our movement and/or the leaders thereof. Thursday's Tog Morning Journal (May 26) had an article in which the name of your revered and beloved father appeared. The whole story sounds esoteric to me but it exemplifies the impact your father had on Jewry throughout the world.

I am taking the liberty of sending it to you.

It will be a pleasure to see you at the Commission meeting in Toronto in a few weeks.

Warmest regards.

Cordially,

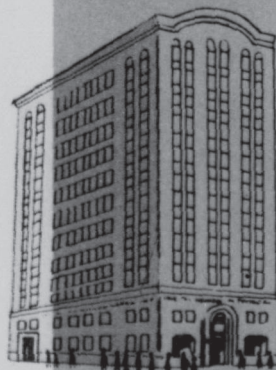
*Chaim*

Dr. Chaim I. Etrog  
Director, Adult Jewish Education

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June 3, 1966

Dr. Chaim I. Etrog  
Director, Adult Jewish Education  
Union of American Hebrew Congregations  
838 Fifth Avenue  
New York, New York 10021

Dear Chaim:

Thank you for sending me on the article from the Tog which I had not seen. I appreciate it.

I, too, look forward to seeing you at the Conference.

Sincerely,

DANIEL JEREMY SILVER  
DJS:mgm

