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Temple Israel, Canton, correspondence and speech, 1968.

TEMPLE ISRAEL

333 TWENTY-FIFTH STREET, N. W.

CANTON, OHIO 44709

RABBI PAUL GORIN

January 23, 1968

Rabbi Daniel J. Silver
The Temple
University Circle & Silver Park
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

My dear Rabbi:

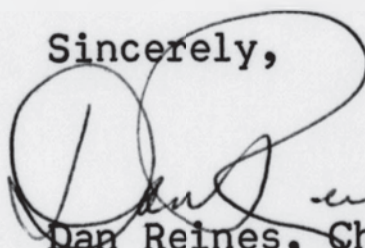
We are delighted that you are able to arrange your schedule to be with us at our Annual Congregational Dinner Meeting on Sunday night, May 19th, 1968.

We are looking forward to sharing a most interesting evening with you and hearing, among other things, about The National Foundation for Jewish Culture.

As soon as our program is completed, I will contact you further concerning the time of our dinner and the proceedings.

With kindest regards,

Sincerely,


Dan Reines, Chairman
Dinner Committee

January 24, 1968

Mr. Dan Reines, Chairman
Dinner Committee
Temple Israel
333 Twenty-fifth Street N. W.
Canton, Ohio 44709

Dear Mr. Reines:

I will be delighted to be with you at your annual congregational dinner on Sunday, May 19th. I will speak on some theme relating to the new dimensions of American Jewish thought. It is my understanding that an honorarium of \$200.00 has been approved for this lecture and I look forward to my visit.

Sincerely,

DANIEL JEREMY SILVER

DJS:rvf

TEMPLE ISRAEL

333 TWENTY-FIFTH STREET, N. W.

CANTON, OHIO 44709

RABBI PAUL GORIN

April 2, 1968

My dear Rabbi:

We are in the process of preparing our news release for our Annual Dinner Meeting, Sunday, May 19th. May we have a glossy and brief biographical sketch for inclusion in our story?

We are looking forward to your visit here. With kindest regards,



AMERICAN JEWISH
ARCHIVES
Sincerely,
Dan Reines
Dan Reines

Rabbi Daniel J. Silver
The Temple
University Circle & Silver Park
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Sent 4/3/68 mgm

TEMPLE ISRAEL

333 TWENTY-FIFTH STREET, N. W.

CANTON, OHIO 44709

RABBI PAUL GORIN

June 10, 1968

Rabbi Daniel J. Silver
The Temple
University Circle & Silver Park
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

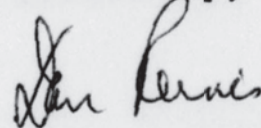
Dear Rabbi Silver:

On behalf of the membership of Temple Israel, I wish to express our very deep appreciation for your graciousness in addressing our Annual Meeting. Your timely message left a deep and profound impression upon all assembled, and contributed eloquent values and insights in our search for understanding of our obligations and directions as Reform Jews of today. Our entire membership present felt that it was one of our most satisfying Annual Meetings, in terms of the inspiring message and the warmth-of-spirit of all who were present.

I am enclosing herewith an honorarium as an expression of our very sincere appreciation for your inspirational and enlightening message. I hope you will pardon our delay in forwarding this to you.

With warmest regards to your dear wife, whom we enjoyed so greatly meeting; and with best wishes for your continued success and fulfillment in all your endeavors,

Sincerely,



Dan Reines, Chairman

June 16, 1968

Mr. Dan Reines
Chairman, Annual Meeting
Temple Israel
333 25th Street, N.W.
Canton, Ohio 44709

Dear Dan:

I enjoyed very much being at Temple Israel. It was a very warm and happy occasion and a privilege to share it with you. My wife joins me in sending our very best.

Sincerely,

DJS:mgm

Daniel Jeremy Silver

THE MISSION OF ISRAEL

The Temple
Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver

Sunday, January 29, 1967

Rhetoric is the art of persuasion. Hyperbole is the language of exaggeration. Hyperbole is the pressing of an argument beyond its logical limits. ~~Those of us who respect both rhetoric and reason, speech and scrupulous truth, can often see the words of hyperbole rising in a speaker's throat before he utters them.~~ Generally, hyperbole is born of a lack of preparation or an excess of emotion. Whatever its origin, hyperbole is a danger because it distorts ~~and conceals~~ a basically sound idea. Recently, I came across such an example; and it is with this text I should like to begin. It was written by a contemporary Jew and is by way of ^{AN EXPLANATION} ~~a comment on~~ ^{OF JEWISH SURVIVAL} ~~his appreciation of his faith.~~ "No, Jews will not vanish; for even if we do not choose to be Jews, the world needs Jews -- and Jewish values. If there were no Jews, the world would have to create us. Jews without Judaism are nothing; Jews, living out their Judaism, are a leaven of civilization, and must survive for the sake of the world."

I love Judaism. Needless to say, I delight in being a Jew; and I firmly believe that such wisdom as I possess comes in largest measure from a lifelong exposure to our tradition. But can I say with honesty that the fate of two billion earthlings rests upon the shoulders of thirteen million Jews? - That, if there were no Jews, the world would have to create us? - Is there an adequate reason to continue the Jewish enterprise? What is the virtue of stubbornly carrying on, knowing as we do that prejudice and even hate will be a constant background to our history? Why keep the good ship Judaism afloat? Why persevere? Even though it is the whiner and the sniveling

who generally ask this question, it is a legitimate question. How would I justify the continuance of Israel? Why should we continue to be?

Our generation is not the first to ask this question. It was ^{First} asked some 2,600 years ago. In the seventh pre-Christian century, the armies of the Babylonian emperor, Nebuchadnezzar, conquered little Judea, pulled down the walls of Jerusalem, razed the Temple, and marched off our forefathers to be slave labor on the emperor's vast public works projects in Babylon. As they trudged wearily eastward, our poets expressed the anguish and the tears of exile in a moving lament:

"How doth the city sit solitary,
That was full of people!
How is she become as a widow!
She that was great among the nations,
And princess among the provinces,
How is she become tributary!
She weepeth sore in the night,
And her tears are on her cheeks;
She hath none to comfort her."

Years passed, soul searing years of back-breaking toil. Their labor was that of pack animals. There seemed no end to this punishment. Men began to wonder if it would not be better to forget Jerusalem, forego the faith, and assimilate into the Babylonian environment. At least their children would not be treated as enemy aliens and pariahs. Fortunately, a wise and sensitive prophet came forward among the exiles. We do not know his name. All that remains are a few of the sermons that he preached to the encampment. At a later date, these were written down on a parchment scroll which was stitched, for some reason, onto the scroll of the writings of an earlier prophet Isaiah. This chance editing caused historians to name the

unknown seer Deutero Isaiah, or the second Isaiah, and so he is known to us. Whatever his name, every Jew, indeed all Western civilization, owe^s him a profound debt of gratitude. He gave his generation the courage and understanding to remain steadfast. He taught them to carry on. He explained to them their anguish. He encouraged them with a sense of purpose. Why the exile? "The exile," he said, "is a refining fire." Just as a metal worker needs to boil down the ore so that he can skim the dross, the impurities off the top, so God had to boil down the people to separate out the weakling, the self-pitying, the gluttons, the greedy, those who had polluted Judea. Once God had refined the nation, the exile would end. God would pardon his people, return them to their Holy Land and, there, the selected remnant would create a society based on the Mitzvot and the Torah - on the moral teachings and the faith. Such an Israel would not only be a graceful and pleasant place, but an example to all Mankind - a light unto the nations.

"I, the Lord, have called thee in righteousness
And have taken hold of thy hand,
And kept thee, and set thee for a covenant of the people,
For a light of the nations;
To open the blind eyes,
To bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,
And them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house."

First the refining fire, then the return to a Zion alight with the way of God; then the admiration and, hopefully, the emulation of the nations.

To the question, "Why remain Jewish," Deutero Isaiah answered, "Because Judaism is a unique faith. If Jews will organize their communities after the highest disciplines of the Torah, not only will their lives be inspired,

but other nations will be encouraged to reach for a quality of national ^{more} life principled than that of the ordinary pagan, ^{CASTE DIVIDED} class divided, autocratic state.

Modern Zionism drew its inspiration from these teachings of Deutero-Isaiah. The New Israel was not to be simply ^{AN} ~~another~~ ordinary State or even just a convenient refuge for those who had to flee Hitler. Israel was to be a ^{JEWISH} ~~prophetic~~ State. Amos and Jeremiah had written its Bill of Rights. Seventy years ago, Theodore Herzl took time off from his political activities to write a novel. He called it, "The Old New Land." In it he offered his description of Zion reborn. Israel was to be a participatory democracy, humane, just, concerned with human welfare. Herzl describes a series of unique industrial and agricultural cooperatives, a well-articulated educational and social welfare apparatus, and the visits by ambassadors and technicians from many states, who came, not to visit the archaeological sites, but to examine these model collectives and the unusual social order. Herzl's Utopian vision, of course, came to be. Teachers, engineers, city planners from Central Africa, Central America, and Southeast Asia have come in large numbers to Israel to see the kibbutzim, the rehabilitation settlements, the new towns, and the new agriculture. Israel, in many ways, has been a light unto the nations. ^{AND} In Israel, there has always been a loyal opposition who might properly be called The Deutero-Isaiahniks. Whenever, in the name of economy, someone tried to cut the school budget, or to scrimp on immigrant housing, or was careless of the rights of the religious minorities, or demanded that an Arab settlement be uprooted for some minor reason, someone was sure to remind him that Israel should be a light unto the nations, ~~much as Martin Buber had some years ago in a debate with Ben-Gurion in which he argued against some minor restrictions~~

which the government intended to place on the movement of village Arabs:

"The messianic message is applied especially to Israel and demands of it to make an exemplary beginning in the actual work of realization, that it be a nation which establishes justice and truth in its institutions and activities. Therefore, Isaiah not only calls upon the Gentiles to stream to Mt. Zion and there receive a second Torah, the universal one; he supplements this by a summons to the house of Israel, to walk before him in the light of the Lord.

Deutero-Isaiah spoke intelligently and forcefully. The essence of his message was, and is, that Israel as a nation must be inspired by the highest religious duties and that such a nation would not only be a happy place to live but a compelling advertisement for the Torah. Other nations would be moved to adopt many of the same disciplines. Being an Israeli can never be - or should never be - a routine citizenship.

I have cited Deutero-Isaiah at some length because his text is the classic modern starting of ^{most} an answer to the question, "Why remain Jewish."

The point I wish to make is that Deutero-Isaiah's arguments are helpful in the homeland but inadequate for the Diaspora. In some hands, ~~the Diaspora~~ teachings assume this form.

Jews stand for ~~Judaism~~ whatever their ordinary vices. The suburban American Jewish businessman and the young Israeli ~~sabra~~ remind the world of the prophets and Love Thy Neighbor as Thyself. We are an omnipresent symbol of the world's ^{greatest} spiritual tradition; Q.E.D., "Jews living as Jews are a leaven to civilization and we must continue for the sake of the world."

Your children reject this logic and rightly so. They will not remain Jewish simply because ^{you} couldn't have a ~~next~~ without Jews - or because Christian ^{messiah} is based on the existence of Jews. Half the world is non-Christian, and their world view is unembarrassed by the Judeo-Christian

love-hate relationship. This generation will not be outer directed. It will remain Jewish only ~~if~~ being Jewish positively and helpfully affects their lives.

Nor is it at all clear that there would be no ~~light in our world~~ ^{ONE TO LIGHT THE WAY} if there were no Jews - "That if there were no Jews, the world would have to create us." ^{25 CENTURIES AGO} In the ~~Deutero-Isaiahic~~ world, Judaism had a unique and radically different teaching. Only Israel taught the One God. Only Israel insisted on human worth and ~~the~~ human equality. Today, there are many dedicated groups of men and women who are lighting the lamps of civilization, who are encouraging others to reach beyond the ordinary. There is the quiet, courageous teaching of reconciliation of the Quakers. There is the magnificent refinement of the structure of social welfare by the Scandinavians; there is the non-violent gospel of racial rebellion among the disciples of Martin Luther King. We can no longer say that, if there were no Jews, the world would have to create Jews, ^{THAT IS TOO MUCH CHALLENGE EVEN FOR US} though ~~we~~ ^{AND} can say and do say Judaism offers a significant spiritual and sound way of life, that our world has very few such enlightened ~~enterprises~~ ^{CULTURES}.

Deutero-Isaiah spoke of a Judea reborn, organized according to Torah Law, promising not only a decent life to ^{ITS} ~~the~~ citizens, but by its very existence suggesting to other nations the virtue of justice and truth. ^{AND IN THAT WAY SPEEDING THE MILLENNIUM} Just as parents, by their example, set a standard for their children, just as Ghandi or Schweitzer, or Einstein, by their sacrificial achievements, encouraged many men and women so Israel would be, and could be, a shining example to other nations and faiths.

Now, of course, despite Deutero-Isaiah's encouragement, all of Israel did not conduct themselves as Saints; but, when Cyrus, the emperor of Persia, allowed the exiles to return late in the sixth century, the leadership of the

return set out to organize Judea as a Holy Land. Ezra established the Torah as the constitution of the reborn state and the religious way of life so established not only sustained and ennobled the Jewish people but, in time, gave birth to two new spiritual traditions - Christianity and Iscari.

Neither stubborn pride nor an appeal to a ^{A SYMBOLIC ROLE} ~~presumed unique theological~~ ^{PROVIDES} ~~virtue~~ as a satisfactory answer to the question, "Why remain Jewish?" It is not enough to teach anti-Semitism and competitive religions. Nor is it sufficient ^{ONLY} to teach and preach what our nineteenth century grandfathers called the mission of Israel - that our justification is to be a light to the nations, to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeons, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house. Put another way, center city tutoring and the urban coalition - whatever their intrinsic merit - are not adequate strategies of Jewish survival.

Reform Judaism has been particularly prone to this emphasis on lighting every communal dark corner save those of the Jewish community itself. The explanation is in part historical. During the Medieval Ages, religious allegiance was automatic. The state required it of you. You were born a Jew, you remained a Jew because your passport said you were a Jew. To this day, Russia continues this ancient system. ^{Nineteenth} ~~Sixteenth~~ century political emancipation ^{began to break} ~~broke~~ down these high walls of sequestration. For the first time, there were other options open to the indifferent Jew save that of grin and bear it. Loyalty demanded its pound of ^{A BURNING AND BURNING} ~~uncomfortable flesh~~ and many of weak faith wondered if the price was worth it. After all, German, French, and English culture were high cultures. Could not one be just as adequate a person as an Episcopalian or an Agnostic? Conversion or assimilation would at least free one's children of the disabilities of a prejudiced world. The early leaders of reform Judaism were born into this tension, and they

tried to counter it by emphasizing the limitations of the various European ~~and Western~~ cultures. True, Germany was a scholarly and skillful nation, but could one prize German nationalism and Germanic love of authority and the obvious tolerance in Germany of religious and racial prejudice. Many of the observations made by these early reforms were perceptive and helped prepare Jews to be on their guard against excessive nationalism and materialism. It was true that in Germany man served the state while in Judaism the state must serve man. ^{Such} ~~These~~ analyses helped to make clear wherein Judaism differed ~~from all modern philosophies.~~

Well and good and necessary. Indeed, we still need that ~~kind of~~ careful analysis ^{which will} that shows that Americanism and the Torah are not synonymous. ~~Judaism still has much to teach this age.~~ But these reformist preachers were children of their age; and the overriding need of the age was political and economic acceptance. They wanted to be part of, not apart. They trembled at every thought of community and distinctiveness; so they took Deutero-Isaiah and pulled his nationalistic teeth. They emphasized the struggle for a better Germany, not the struggle for a purified Israel. Deutero-Isaiah's Zionism was anathema to them. Their congregations ~~became~~ ^{were} child centered. The congregation was justified as a school house in which to prepare the young for an essentially secular existence. The adult didn't have to come to Temple. He ~~went into social action~~ ^{enlisted in liberal causes} and the revolution of 1848, ~~and direct service.~~ ^{as he understood the 10 commandments and the 600 natured decrees of the Torah became impossible as only the 10}

Deutero-Isaiah became Don Quixote riding off in all directions to solve all of the problems of the world as long as they were not in his own community. It won't wash. It's not functional. Even if all thirteen million Jews in our world were lamplighters, we couldn't erase the obdurate evil. The mission's high-flown idealism was a useful standard for Yom Kippur sermons, but is embarrassing theology. More often than not,

unyielding reality forced the missionaries to fall back not on specific examples of saintliness - how saintly was a German burgher? - but on ~~these~~ ^{that} uncertain claims of primacy. "Our faith is older than their faith." Simply by being, we remind the world of God and Sinai. Our mere physical presence somehow triggers the super ego of Western Man.



MISSION OF ISRAEL

- 8 -

No, Jews will not vanish. For even if we do not choose to be Jews, the world needs Jews -- and Jewish values. If there were no Jews, the world would have to create us, Jacques Maratain, distinguished Roman Catholic philosopher, described Judaism as ". . . like an activating leaven injected into the mass, it gives the world no peace, it bars slumber, it teaches the world to be discontented and restless as long as the world has not God; it stimulates the movement of history." Jews without Judaism are nothing; Jews, living out their Judaism, are a leaven of civilization, and must survive for the sake of the world.

Such is the intricate love-hate relationship between Judaism and her daughter that Jews and Judaism still play a role within the religious conscience of Christendom. But does this symbolic role have any force among the legions of atheists and humanists or in the vast thronging non-Christian world of Asia and Africa? We must wonder whether today's Jews will continue to accept Judaism for no better reason than that some non-Jews require the presence of Jews as a reminder of their Old Testament patrimony?

WHAT I AM TRYING TO SAY IS THAT
A meaningful philosophy of Jewish existence must validate Jewish existence in personal terms. 'What will it mean in my life if I identify myself with Judaism? Will I be wiser, more stable, more aware of the possibilities of my being?'

We can not survive as puppets in a theological shadow play, nor as pensioners of bygone dreams. The happy piety that the survival of Judaism is quintessential to the world encourages a loyal few, but only a loyal few. We are a statistically-minded generation: thirteen million people out of a world population of over two billion hardly encourages dreams of supreme importance. We are a self-analytic

generation and we know that we do not qualify as the Lamad Vavniks of mankind. There can be a world without Jews and we can not be confident that such a world would be any more damned than our world may be despite our presence.

Israel's primary responsibility has always been to cultivate dignity and justice in Israel. The far mystery, the cosmic usefulness of that achievement, we leave to God. "The miracle is not always recognized by him who experiences it." The messianic vision has it that in the end of days the many will flock to the mountain of the Lord. They will come to Zion because Zion has kept the faith and represents the faith. ~~To keep the faith and to represent the faith is the first responsibility of the faithful.~~ In that sense Israel's example is important. What you do not find in our tradition is the image of Don Quixote setting out to overthrow all the evil of the world with a broken lance and a sway-backed horse. ^{ISRAEL'S} ~~Our fathers~~ ^{PRIMARY OBLIGATION WAS TO BECOME A SACRIFICED PEOPLE} insisted that he who saves but a single life it is accounted to him as if he saved the ~~whole world.~~ ^{PEOPLE GO UP TO ZION BY THEMSELVES - FIRST PURIFY THEMSELVES THEN ADORN OTHERS}

Those who would discuss the survival of Israel should keep in mind the oft-told tale of the rabbi who set out with high hopes to save the world until repeated disappointments taught him that this task was beyond his capacity. Then he had hopes of kindling the fires of faith throughout his congregation. For all his work many remained unresponsive and indifferent. Then he sought to raise his family in certain decency, but even here he stumbled. Each home has its profligate. Finally, at the end of a long and industrious life he realized that religious responsibility rests on the energetic cultivation of one's own soul. The hope that one's labor will bear fruit encourages us to do more, but it is a hope that only God can validate. What an achievement it would be if we could truly forge Israel as a kingdom of priests and as

a holy nation. Perhaps the holiness of that nation would encourage or shame others to be more energetic and more disciplined. We certainly hope so. The point is, that we do not know God's ways are not our ways.

The validity of Jewish survival can be established in terms of the growth and the sensitivity and the maturity which Judaism makes possible for those who ~~not~~ opt for our way of life. There is, or can be, a formative tension between traditional ideas and institutions and the Jew who searches for understanding and seeks an inspiring vision. For Israel to be a witness of God to the world there must be a uniqueness and a distinctiveness to our religious culture. Simply to exist as a carbon copy of ~~surrounding~~ surrounding cultures is neither a commendable nor defensible accomplishment.

Heschel has stated the particular dilemma which faces anyone who would justify Jewish loyalty to the modern Jew:

"The doors of Western culture are open before him, and whenever he wishes to enter, he finds a welcome place. Why should he not assimilate? The worthwhileness of belonging to the Jewish people must not be taken for granted. Why should he not detach himself from the Jewish community and join another community? Can we in all sincerity say to the Jew: 'he who separates himself from Judaism commits spiritual suicide?'

The alternative to Judaism is no longer the boorish and sodden peasant culture of Eastern Europe. The list of Nobel Laureates is heavy with scholars born of Jewish parents who, in their adult lives, made no effort to identify themselves with the Jewish people and its cultural or religious institutions.

The early Reformers emphasized certain high universal duties
Mission sermonics dilated on the vision but neglected the people and

and their unique way of life. *They* The mission emphasized a reformist crusade but not the reforming pieties. Yet it is these pieties which alone provide an environment in which one can grow not only in independence of spirit, but in social responsibility; not only in awareness, but in holiness. In a confused materialistic age there are all too few stable spiritual environments. Our age, for all its scientific progress, has not been radically successful in providing an environment in which children can grow up into balanced, wholesome and sensitive people. Men have been taught to compete and to subordinate their interests to the state, to mistake possession for happiness, to accept the blasphemy of war, to dull their instinct for sympathy. Educational decision has been governed largely by economic and political ideologies. The home has been reduced to an economic unit and parents place on others many of the responsibilities of training and guidance. The education of the whole man has been neglected for the education of the technician, the soldier, the faithful comrade, the patriot. Over the centuries Judaism, per ~~contra, has~~ contra, has developed a way of life which insists and emphasizes that the soul of each child is precious and that man justifies and fulfills himself not as a servant of the machine, nor of the state, but of God. Our classic texts are biographical and humane rather than scientific and *strategic*, *Technical* ~~political~~. Our classic achievements are a sensitive home, a truth-seeking school, and a synagogue searching for God. Our religion is a sanctified way of life; a culture which sets as its goal the disciplined man fully informed, spiritually independent, but socially conscious and morally bound to the Commandments of God. Such a culture, if it is seriously pursued, justifies its existence:

LEO
BAECK

Around every people, each in his way and each in his place, there is something hidden. But around this people there is more of the mystery rising out of eternal mystery. When the poets and the prophets, the teachers and the thinkers who arose from the people's midst came to think about their people -- each in his time and in his way -- they contemplated the unending worlds, the harmony of the spheres, the "heavens which declare the glory of God." Then they spoke to this people of its ways and its hope, of the commandments which it must follow in order to encounter peace. Only one whose world has opened to the great mystery, which dwells in all whether he stands within or sees from without, will be able to understand the reason why this people is to exist and why it does exist. Every people can be chosen for a history, for a share in the history of humanity. Each is a question which God has asked, and each people must answer. But more history has been assigned to this people than to any other people. God's question speaks stronger here.

There is unique benefit in being Jewish and it is a unique opportunity to be a Jew, to participate in this particular unfolding of truth and life. Our fathers lingered on the people's response to the invitation to Sinai. (Hebrew) precedes (Hebrew). Once there is the original sense of corporate identity, the unique corporate responsibility of the people flows inevitably and out of its lifelong task of admiration and emulation comes the unfolding of that which is unique to it. As it reaches for the truth it draws unto itself. A lengthy history as long and successful as that of the Jew is in its own way the proof of the virtue of its particularity and its claim on our partnership in this history.