



## Daniel Jeremy Silver Collection Digitization Project

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### **MS-4850: Daniel Jeremy Silver Papers, 1972-1993.**

Series III: The Temple Tifereth-Israel, 1946-1993, undated.

Sub-series A: Events and Activities, 1946-1993, undated.

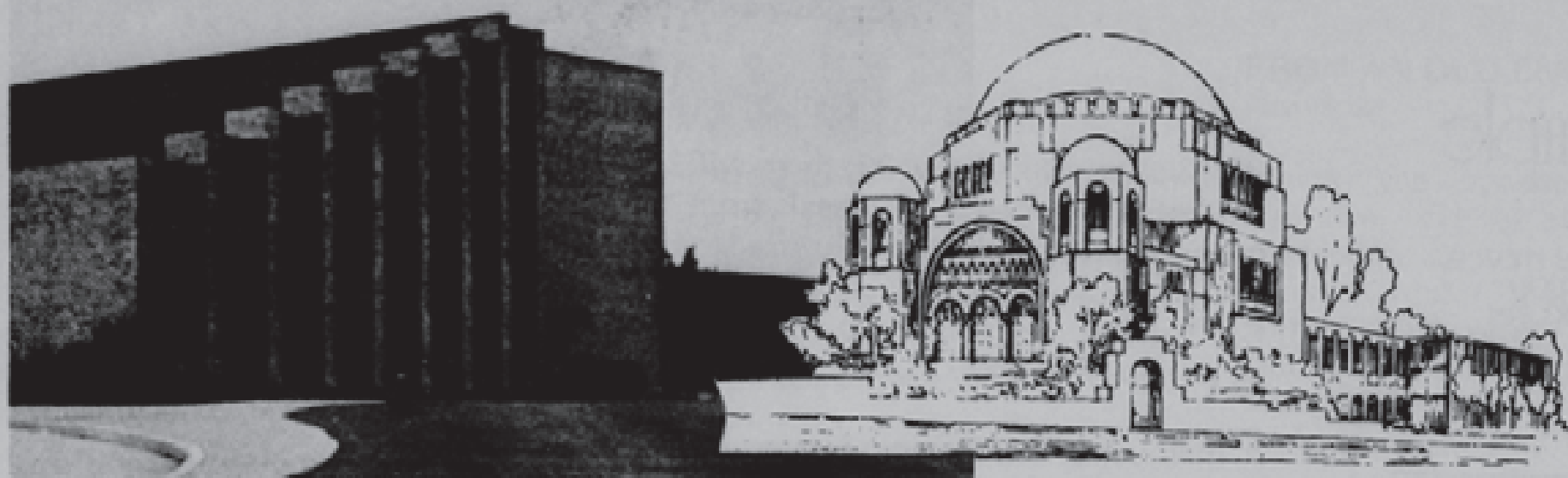
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Newsletters, "From the Rabbi's Desk" articles, 1978-1981.



December 23, 1979  
Vol. LXVI, No. 8

# The Temple Bulletin

## FROM AN OLD ENGLISH DESK:

England's most famous Cricket Stadium is called The Lords. It is on a street named St. John's Woods. Just across the street from The Lords Cricket Ground is the major liberal synagogue of London where it is reported to have described the Liberal Jewish Synagogue as the house of worship where the Lord is across the street.

I went to the Liberal Synagogue last night, Wednesday, the fourteenth of November, to deliver the twenty-sixth annual Claude G. Montefiore Memorial Lecture. Montefiore was one of England's great learned amateurs. Along with another fine scholar of the day, Israel Abrahams, Montefiore inaugurated and edited the *Jewish Quarterly Review*, which has been for the better part of the last century a major avenue for communication between Jewish scholars particularly interested in helping non-Jews understand the fine spiritual reach of our tradition. Again, together with a fellow man of letters, Herbert Loewe, he edited a volume entitled *A Rabbinic Anthology* in which the various categories of theological thought are listed and appropriate statements from rabbinic literature are set out for everyone to read. These sayings, together with the explanations that Montefiore and Loewe provided, became staples of many a teacher's and preacher's library. Loewe had played a commanding intellectual role in English Jewry, in no small measure due to

the fact that he could sponsor from his own funds literary and scholarly projects in which he was interested. Mr. Montefiore had been for over three decades President of the Liberal Synagogue where we were speaking. Indeed, the liberal movement in England reflected, and continues to reflect, many of his attitudes with a respect for learning. I witnessed this lecture series and others which had attracted distinguished scholars. There is great concern to help the larger community understand the Jewish way, and there is a certain diffidence about the whole question of peoplehood.

Like so many liberals who came into their maturity before the first World War, Claude Montefiore was adamant-

ly opposed to Zionism which he looked on as a regressive movement which would turn Jews away from their individual responsibilities to England and France and the United States and towards purely domestic concerns. He looked forward to the emergence of a brotherhood of good will, to establishing the bonds of communication and understanding between peoples. He died in the 1930's before the full tragedy of that decade had broken upon the world.

Montefiore was a high-minded man of good character. I discovered in doing some research into his life that he had only one vanity - he delighted to read the haftarah of Jonah on Yom Kippur. This is one of the highest honors

(Continued inside)

## SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES

December 23, 1979  
10:30 a.m.  
The Temple Branch

### COLLEGE REUNION SERVICE

A COLLEGE VIEW OF THE  
EIGHTIES: WHAT THE FUTURE  
HOLDS IN STORE

December 30, 1979  
10:30 a.m.  
The Temple Branch

HERB KAMM

will speak on

THE YEAR THAT WAS —  
OR, WHAT A MEGILLAH!

Friday Evening Service — 5:30 to 8:10 p.m. — The Temple Chapel  
Sabbath Service — 11:15 a.m. — The Branch



## WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

The membership committee, under the chairmanship of Robert and Beverly Kendis, is pleased to announce that the following members have joined The Temple this year. The Temple extends a warm welcome to each of these families, and looks forward to their full participation in our Temple life.

Bart M. & Sandra Baker  
Richard & Linda Barnett  
Carl & Barbara Beres  
Harold & Elizabeth Blum  
Harvey & Ricki Brown  
James M. & Debbra Brown  
Kathy Cusher  
Robert & Patricia Dery  
Aaron & Deborah Donsky  
Leslie & Donna Dvorin  
Bruce & Myrna Eglin  
Gerald & Rita Elson  
Harvey & Maxine Frutkin  
Howard M. & Susan Galkin  
Jeffrey & Gayle Glick  
James & Randi Grodin  
Richard L. & Caryl Halle  
Leonard Horowitz & Cheryl Beres  
Howard & Lois Israel  
Robert & Madeline Jacobs  
Dr. Robert & Rhona Jacobson  
Gary & Susan Jacobs  
Ira & Amy Kaplan  
Richard & Rita Kaplan  
William S. & Suzanne Katz  
David & Eileen Kaufman  
Robert & Lois Kemp  
Dr. Daniel Kendis

Dr. Loren & Fern Kendis  
Otto Lehman  
James & Betsy Lewin  
Dr. James & Belinda Lieberman  
Dr. Lawrence & Dr. Ruth Martin  
Edward W. Meister  
Anthony S. & Babette Meldon  
Dr. Marvin & Renate Miller  
Lewis & Rebecca Mindlin  
Richard & Janice Newman  
Paul & Linda Ornstein  
Dr. Avram & Ada Pearlstein  
Roger & Mary Ann Perlmutter  
Philip J. & Helene Polien  
Dr. Marc & Gail Price  
Dr. Marc Rasansky  
Dr. Fred & Lynn Rosenberg  
Iris Rubenfield  
Robert C. & Suzanne Steiner  
Dr. Ronald & Eugenia Strauss  
Walton L. & Augusta Strauss  
Steven & Susan Rubin  
Larry & Marcie Shanker  
Joel & Michelle Tanenbaum  
Howard & Lida Turetsky  
Thomas & Monica Udelson  
Richard & Sharon Weiss  
Marjorie Wininger

## FROM AN OLD ENGLISH DESK:

(Continued)

which the synagogue traditionally can give, and for all the years of his leadership at the Liberal Synagogue it is an honor that was reserved for him. This vanity vested that the book of Jonah might be an appropriate subject for me for the lecture and I spoke on that theme.

One of the unexpected features of the evening was the discovery that Montefiore had actually recorded his reading of Jonah, and the rabbi, John Rayner, played a bit of that recording before my speech.

It was a pleasant evening and I am getting used to English forms. One of these is that someone in the community is asked to make a vote of thanks once the question and answer period is completed. This worthy is selected ahead of time and the vote of thanks is often not only an appreciation of the speaker's efforts but that worthy's improvement on the speaker's thoughts. I have not made up my mind what I feel about this procedure except that I have discovered that it rather lengthens the evening since the person selected feels called upon to spend more than a brief moment or two carrying out the assigned task. Between us we managed to spend a pleasant hour and a half doing full justice to the forty-four verses which comprise the entirety of the book of Jonah.

*Daniel Jeremy Silver*

## AT-HOME DINNER

"The Time Has Come," The Men's Club said, "To Speak of Many Things especially our third annual At-Home-Dinner to be held Saturday, January 12."

The first two were so successful, we must go to the third.

If you are fond of home cooked food, an evening of conviviality with Men's Club friends in an intimate, small

group setting, and an evening that will not be expensive, then plan on attending.

The Men's Club supplies the entrée (last year's tenderloin was fantastic), the guests will divide the rest of the meal; we will help you plan!

In the past, some members were disappointed because they let the deadline slip by and could not be accom-

modated. Avoid this! R.S.V.P. and mark the date on your calendar.

The evening is limited to Men's Club members and their spouses. If you are not yet paid up, enclose your check for \$15.00 and start enjoying the benefits of belonging.

R.S.V.P. to Shy Kulber at 321-2216.



January 6, 1980  
Vol. LXVI, No. 7

# The Temple Bulletin

## FROM AN OLD ENGLISH DESK:

This has been the fortnight of Anthony Blunt. Blunt has been a noted historian who, until his retirement, was director of the famous Courtauld Institute and had been for several decades the surveyor of the queen's pictures. He was also a Russian spy.

It all began at Cambridge University in the early 1930's. It was a time of depression and political disillusionment. A small group of upper-class undergraduates came together and formed a group known as The Apostles which was dedicated equally to literature, politics and, apparently, homosexuality. The spiritual leader of the group was the novelist, E. M. Forster. The politics of the group were Left. A number of the group moved from enthusiasm for the Communist system to actual activity and support of the Soviet Union. Included among these were Guy Burgess and Donald Maclean who, along with Blunt, infiltrated the English Intelligence system, and during the war and shortly thereafter passed on to the Soviets important information. Burgess and Maclean fled to Russia in 1951. Blunt has peacefully continued his career until this day. He was uncovered by information which became public as a result of America's Freedom of Information Act. The existence of other members of this spy group has long been bruited about. Following leads secured from American Intelligence materials, reporters

here were able to pinpoint Blunt as one of these men. And, finally, two weeks ago Mrs. Thatcher, the Prime Minister, was asked directly about it in the House of Commons and revealed publicly Blunt's name.

The whole thing would be a tired story of thirty-year old spying were it not for the fact that the knowledge of Blunt's activities has been suspected since the early 1950's. He confessed to his activities in 1964 before a grant of immunity. Knowledge of his activities has, therefore, been public, at least in that old boys' network, which still has a great deal to say about the affairs of this island. Yet, nothing was done to strip him of his honors or to cord off his appointments. Indeed, he continued to enjoy

the esteem of the Royal family, of his professorial colleagues and of the large artistic and upper-class community of which he was a part. Every country has its spies. A spy enters a risk profession and can expect a long jail sentence if he is caught. A number of British citizens who spied for the Soviets during the war were caught and have served, or are serving, long terms in jail, but none of these were from the upper crust.

The intriguing feature of this whole episode is that the decision to bring in and interrogate Burgess and Maclean was made on a Thursday, that the weekend was allowed to intrude before they were actually to be brought in and quizzed. This gave

(Continued inside)

## SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES

January 6, 1980

10:30 a.m.

The Temple Branch

**BENNETT YANOWITZ**

will speak on

**AMERICA: ISRAEL'S  
GREATEST ASSET**

January 13, 1980

10:30 a.m.

The Temple Branch

**RABBI STEPHEN KLEIN**

will speak on

**A PLAGUE ON  
OUR HOUSE**

Friday Evening Service — 5:30 to 6:10 p.m. — The Temple Chapel  
Sabbath Service — 11:15 a.m. — The Branch



Mr. and Mrs. Club

## TENNIS and RACQUET BALL PARTY

It's back . . . by popular demand!

February 2 — at 7:30 p.m.

Millcreek Racquet Club — 18909 S. Miles Road

Play begins at 8:00 p.m. Late supper served at 10:30 p.m.  
\$22.00 per couple



\*Door Prizes

\*Racquet Ball and Tennis

\*Other Games for Non-Players

Bring your own equipment . . . or equipment available for rental.

R.S.V.P. by January 18 to: Mike and Tina Novick  
3715 Normandy Road  
Shaker Heights, Ohio 44120

Call 991-6538 for more information

### FROM AN OLD ENGLISH DESK:

(Continued)

these two men sufficient time to escape to Russia. There is a suspicion that the upper class protects its own even when the crime is espionage.

An interesting footnote in this whole sorry affair is that shortly after the second World War Blunt and another agent were given a mission by the palace to go to Germany to secure a cache of private letters and documents which had been exchanged between members of the Royal family and their relatives in Germany. Queen Victoria's daughter had been wife of the Kaiser and family ties remained close. The family's concern seems not to have been archival, that is that important papers can be lost, but to secure the return of a file on the Duke of Windsor who had well-known pro-Nazi sympathies which it would have been embarrassing to have publicly displayed at that particular moment in history. Blunt was successful in his mission and it

would seem that both his knighthood and his appointment as the surveyor of the queen's pictures was somehow related to that success. Blunt remained surveyor of the queen's pictures after he had confessed under the grant of immunity; and the suspicion hangs over the palace that they did not act on their knowledge of Blunt's espionage activities out of long-time friendship. Though a democracy, and one in the throes of significant social change, England remains a class-ridden society.

I asked one of the fellows here at Yarnnton why he had left England to teach in Australia. His answer was simple and direct. He had two strikes against him: he had received his degree at a red brick university, and he was a Jew. Given those two facts he could not expect to rise beyond a certain level in his profession.

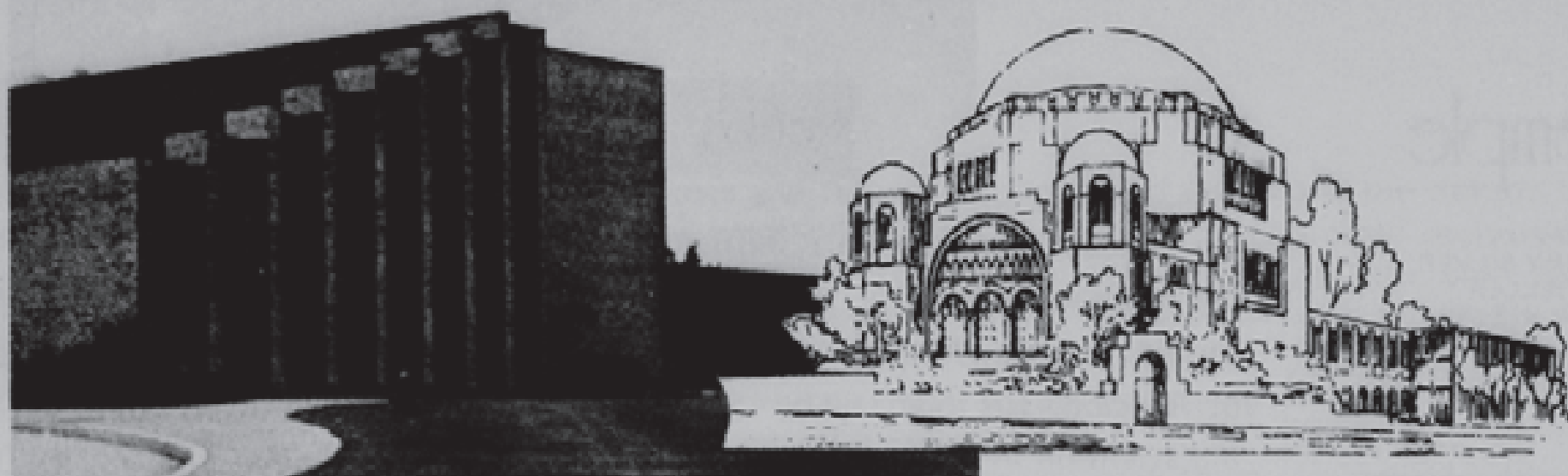
*Daniel Jeremy Silver*

Reminder:  
JANUARY FIRST FRIDAY

The New Cleveland Opera Company  
presents  
The Sounds of Music  
on January 4

Excerpts drawn from two hundred years of operatic masterpieces, highlighting the different ways in which the voice and vocal sounds are used in opera.

Comic examples of stuttering, sneezing and marching provide an enjoyable and informative performance for all — opera-phile and novice.



January 20, 1980  
Vol. LXVI, No. 10

# The Temple Bulletin

## FROM AN OLD ENGLISH DESK:

Leo Baeck was the outstanding rabbinic personality in Berlin between the first and the second World Wars. In addition to his congregational work, he was a scholar of note. His *THE ESSENCE OF JUDAISM* is one of the classic presentations and descriptions of our tradition. Baeck remained with his people during the Nazi madness and, by amazing good fortune, survived the war where he spent most of it interred at the concentration camp Theresienstadt. To keep himself sane he wrote a wonderful history of Judaism while in the camp, titled *THIS PEOPLE ISRAEL*. He secreted little pieces of paper that he found here and there and wrote this history from memory. After the war he spent several years in England and then came to the Hebrew Union College where I was fortunate enough to have him as one of my teachers.

When a seminary was opened in London after the second World War it was dedicated to him. The Leo Baeck Seminary occupies a set of classrooms and offices which are next to and part of the school and office complex of the West London Synagogue. The seminary is a dozen years old and is dedicated to producing rabbis for England and the continent, that is, to the revival of European Judaism. Their graduates already serve throughout the United Kingdom, Amsterdam, Paris, Marseilles and Berlin. I have been teaching a course at the Leo

Baeck on Tuesdays. I have about fifteen students for a seminar on the theme of Heroes and Hero Worship. The course is really an attempt to teach the material that I am trying to shape into a book. I am interested in the way in which our tradition used the figure of Moses. Jewish ethics requires that we pattern ourselves after God rather than after any human being; yet, the temptation has always been there to use this great figure as a pattern of virtue. I have always felt that you can tell a great deal about a culture from the heroes it projects. Moses is not a military man. His courage is not that of the battlefield. Despite the stiffneckedness of his community he never is discouraged. He draws encouragement from his intim-

acy with God. We meet every Tuesday afternoon at two-fifteen in a lovely Board room. The walls are lined with books. There is a grand oval table soon strewn with our books. At first the students were very diffident, tended to take notes and remain silent. There is something in the English educational system which makes them fearful of making a mistake, but gradually they loosened up and I have enjoyed being with them. They come from England, Germany, Holland and Canada. When they leave in a year or two they will be dispersed around the continent.

There are about twenty-five rabbinic students at the Leo Baeck. There

(Continued inside)

## SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES

January 20, 1980

10:30 a.m.

The Temple Branch

DR. BERNARD MARTIN

will speak on

SHOULD JEWS  
SEEK CONVERTS?

January 27, 1980

10:30 a.m.

The Temple Branch

THE TEMPLE  
WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION  
SERVICE

THE 1980's:  
A TIME FOR CHANGE

Friday Evening Service — 5:30 to 6:10 p.m. — The Temple Chapel  
Sabbath Service — 11:15 a.m. — The Branch



## FROM AN OLD ENGLISH DESK:

(Continued)

seems to be about an equal number of men and women. Indeed, European liberal Jewry is ahead of ours in the number of women who are already active in the rabbinate.

The Leo Baeck is making a major contribution to the revitalization of European Jewry. There seems to be much more dynamism in the reform movement here than among the orthodox. Orthodoxy has a strong extreme right wing, but though they now claim the affiliation of perhaps eighty percent of England's congregational members, most of these relationships are nominal. Jews' College, the orthodox seminary, occupies a beautiful set of offices and classrooms just three blocks from the Leo Baeck in the heart of the West End. It has apparently run on hard

times and it has been announced since we are here that it is going to sell this building and move to the school wing of a congregation in a more Jewish area of the city. English orthodoxy has not been able to attract young men into the rabbinate. It is my understanding that there are only three now involved in the rabbinic course at Jews' College. Despite their preference for tradition and ceremony, those Europeans who care are turning more and more to non-traditional answers to give meaning to their religious lives. Herein lies the opportunity of the Leo Baeck Seminary and of the students.

We take Conservative and Reform Judaism for granted; they are major elements in American life. This is not so here in England. Here the Liberal

and the Reform movements represent a small proportion of affiliated Jews, and the chief rabbi is still the man who represents religious Jewry in the larger community. Unfortunately, English orthodoxy lacks vitality. A small number are involved in the Gateshead Yeshiva whose spirit is not unlike that with which we are familiar from Telshe, but the overwhelming majority of Anglo Jewry pay only a formal nod to their religious affiliation. You have the feeling that if the society here were more open, the traditions and affiliations would soon fray and disappear. Being Jewish for many is form without substance. The Leo Baeck is devoted to bringing the substance, the wisdom, front and center; and from what I can observe it is doing a creditable job.

*Daniel Jeremy Silver*

Last Chance for the

### TENNIS and RACQUET BALL PARTY

It's back . . . by popular demand!

February 2 — at 7:30 p.m.

Millcreek Racquet Club — 18909 S. Miles Road

Play begins at 8:00 p.m. Late supper served at 10:30 p.m.

\$22.00 per couple



\*Door Prizes

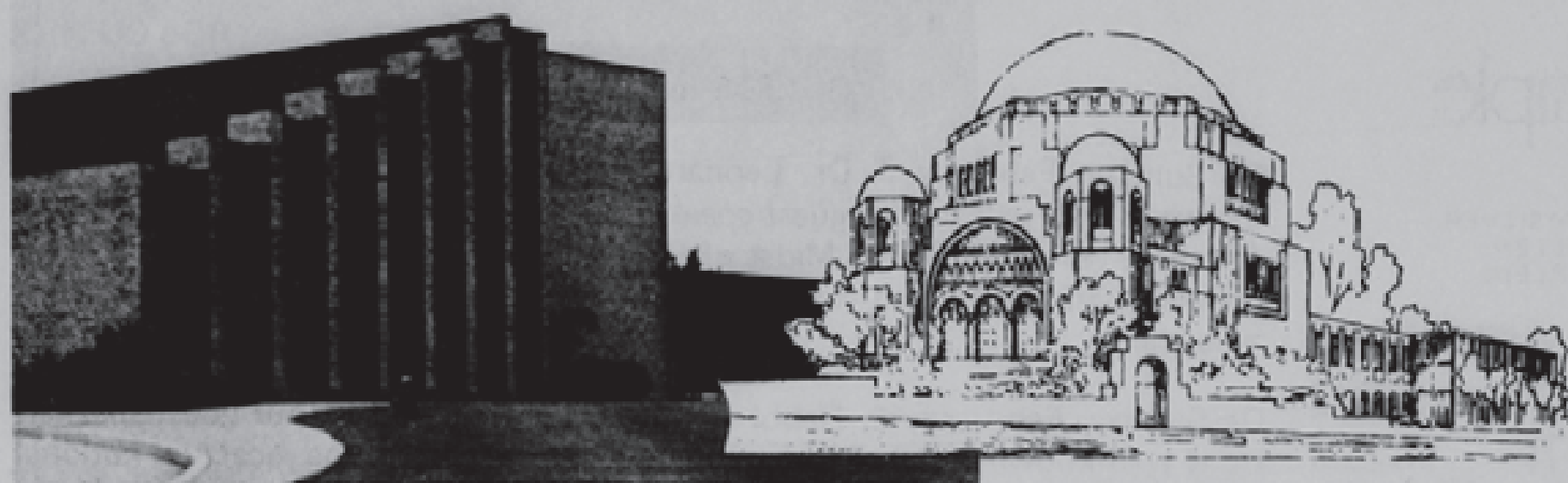
\*Racquet Ball and Tennis

\*Other Games for Non-Players

Bring your own equipment . . . or equipment available for rental.

R.S.V.P. to: Mike and Tina Novick  
3715 Normandy Road  
Shaker Heights, Ohio 44120

Call 991-6538 for more information



February 3, 1980  
Vol. LXVI, No. 11

# The Temple Bulletin

## FROM AN OLD ENGLISH DESK:

These last days I have wanted to grab hold of Time and hold it. The days are passing swiftly. It is the night of the second candle of Hanukkah. Before Hanukkah is over, we will have left England. It is hard to believe that this part of the sabbatical is behind us. My desire to hold time from moving on will suggest to you the happiness that we have had here. The English Fall this year has been as unexpectedly mild and sunny as has, I understand, Cleveland's weather. We have made good friends; I have made real progress on the book; and London and Oxford are two of the most civilized places on earth. One thing I have learned, or rather relearned, is that Jews are Jews the world over.

We attended, the other night, a reception at which the 1979 book awards were given by the National Book League of England, a lovely occasion, in one of the fine old guild halls, the Stationers, in Ludgate. The prize for non-fiction had gone to Nellie Wilson, an Australian-born woman, who had published a study of the late nineteenth-century French Jewish writer, Bernard-Lazare. Bernard-Lazare was of the generation of Emile Zola and the Dreyfus Trial. As a young man he moved in the radical circles of socialism and anarchism, but the anti-semitism behind the Dreyfus trial shook him up and he began to wrestle with his Jewishness and Judaism, not conclusively, before his untimely death

as a very young man. The committee had told us that they were particularly happy that Mrs. Wilson, a non-Jew, had concerned herself with this man and had introduced this fine volume which had been published by Cambridge University Press. As the master of ceremonies was making the presentation, he mentioned the fact of the author, a non-Jewess, having resurrected (hardly a Jewish term) this Jewish writer. From the audience one suddenly heard Mrs. Wilson cry out, "but I am Jewish." The hall broke out in laughter. Being an Englishman and competent on his feet, the presenter neatly covered his tracks. It remains true that no one else is as interested in our life and our civilization as we are.

I have mentioned in an earlier letter the Jewish Center in downtown Oxford. Last Friday night I spoke to a group of undergraduates after Friday services. There are two services: one, orthodox; the other, reform. Everyone joins together for a Shabbat meal and then the group gathers around, and whoever is invited to speak with them begins the session. We spoke about the differences between American and English education and how these affect Jewish Studies. In England everybody reads a particular subject from the time they go up to the university. There are no distribution requirements and no electives. Indeed, at Oxford at least, there is very little that you are required to do except to

(Continued inside)

## SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES

February 3, 1980  
10:30 a.m.  
The Temple Branch

DR. LEONARD KRAVITZ

will speak on

REFORM JUDAISM IN AMERICA:  
FREEDOM IN THE MIDST  
OF CHAOS

February 10, 1980  
10:30 a.m.  
The Temple Branch

FABBI ARTHUR LELYVELD

will speak on

THAT SO-CALLED  
BLACK-JEWISH RIFT

Friday Evening Service — 5:30 to 6:10 p.m. — The Temple Chapel  
Sabbath Service — 11:15 a.m. — The Branch



## FROM AN OLD ENGLISH DESK:

(Continued)

meet weekly with your tutor and to prepare a weekly essay for him. It is a hefty assignment but a very different way of going about education. As a result, the university itself does not present material in what we would call Jewish Studies except to the very few undergraduates who are preparing themselves for a degree in Hebrew in the Oriental Studies Department. In America we have any number of courses at most universities which most students who are interested take as electives and, therefore, have a chance to grapple with modern Jewish Thought or the History of Judaism at a post-religious school level. The young people who were there spoke of a desire for this kind of program, but it is simply not available within the English system.

In thinking a good bit about the comparison between the two educational programs, certainly by the time he has finished his undergraduate work, an Oxford student is far ahead of his American counterpart in competence in a particular field. He has not had the

breadth of experiences and he would find it difficult to shift program and purpose. After the evening, one young man who is reading Hebrew asked if he could see me. Since this was the last week of the term, we arranged to meet in London after my last class at the Leo Baeck. He wanted to know what he could about programs available to him in Jewish Studies in the United States. His problem? Uncertainty. No one in England had presented to him an overall view of the field and he did not know where he wanted to concentrate or whether he wanted to go into Jewish scholarship or into the rabbinate or into a combination of both. I suspect that there are many such young people in every area and that in our world, where so many changes must be made in life, the idea of having simply one spade with which to dig is a very limiting, even dangerous, one; but there is no doubt that the undergraduate, at the completion of his three or four years of study, has attained a fine level of competence in the work on which he has concentrated. And, of course, the nicest part of the evening was to meet

the young people themselves. They are like students the world over, full of ideas and full of interest; but, unlike American students, quite shy, and I am not referring simply to the shyness which nineteen or twenty-year olds often address towards adults. They are shy with each other. The English system is a very private one. Every student at this university has a private room.

One of the greatest advantages of this kind of program, that the Jewish Students Association runs, is that it gives enough time for meetings to take place and for the beginnings of new friendships to emerge. You can pick an American student among his English colleagues by the ease with which he mingles and moves from group to group. I must say that there is a certain charm to reticence. It must be very difficult for those young people who are so shy that their lives must pass surrounded by a heavy degree of loneliness.

*Daniel Jeremy Silver*

### THE TEMPLE SENIORS GROUP

is moving and doing — just see what we have coming up!

#### \* PROGRAM

Thursday, February 21 - 11:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. — The Temple Branch  
Kal Waller — "How to Get the Most Out of Your Medicare and How to Get the Best Return on Your Money."

Delicious Lunch

Musical group

— details to follow — but save the date!

#### \* TELEPHONE REASSURANCE

The Temple Seniors Committee is sponsoring a telephone reassurance

program. Temple Seniors who wish to be called, just to chat, just to say "hi," will regularly receive a call from one of our members. If you would like to receive a call, just let us know! And of course, if you wish to volunteer to make the calls, we need you! Please contact Riva Kohl at 791-4817.

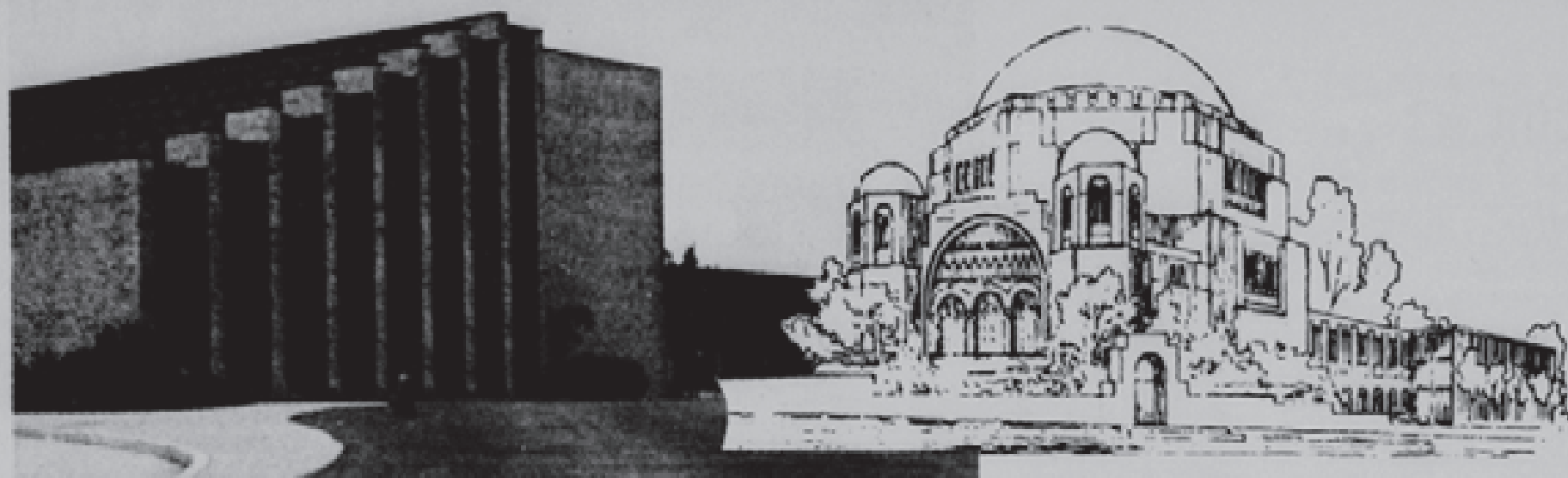
#### \* TRANSPORTATION SERVICE

We are currently in the process of arranging transportation for various Temple programs. It is an important service which we are trying to implement, but it takes time to do it correctly. We will be letting you know (soon we hope!) whenever we start. In the meantime, any VOLUNTEER DRIVERS out there? We will need your help! Think about

performing this important mitzvah.

### TEMPLE SENIORS ACTIVITIES FUND

During the past year, there have been a number of highly successful programs for our older congregants. There have been speakers, movies, and musical presentations; and numerous other activities are planned for the future. The Temple has helped to subsidize these programs for our members. However, several members have already made contributions towards the continuation of such activities. Therefore, we are establishing a new fund, "The Temple Seniors Activities Fund." Anyone wishing to make a contribution to this fund, should contact The Temple office.



February 17, 1980  
Vol. LXVI, No 12

# The Temple Bulletin

## FROM THE RABBI'S DESK:

It was the last night of Hanukkah and Erev Shabbat. Sundown comes early in Morocco and the service in Casablanca's main synagogue, Beth El, began at five-thirty. We arrived at dusk. The last light silhouetted a two-story, rectangular building plastered a light yellow, set in a small tiled courtyard of no particular distinction.

The synagogue is capacious. It can seat perhaps three to four hundred downstairs and another hundred in the women's balcony, which is at the back over the entrance door. There is a central *bimah* about two-thirds of the way into the room, and a tall recessed ark in the east wall opposite the entrance door. That night the ark was hidden since it was fronted by a *huppah* of white pillars and pink tuille which had been erected for two weddings scheduled for the following Sunday. I wish I could say that the *huppah* was a thing of beauty. It was not. The lacquered pillars and rolls of cloth must have represented some local designer's idea of European elegance circa nineteen ten and was startlingly out of place in what was otherwise a rather bare room.

You enter the synagogue through a small vestibule: on the right wall a few donor plaques; on the left what looked like brass mail chutes but are, in fact, slots for donations to various charities. We were on time. The congregation was not, so there was a

chance to talk with a friendly soul, a local merchant, the father of four children, the older two already in Israel. "All our youth are leaving. There is no longer opportunity for them here. Businesses do not give them place and the war in the south has ruined the economy."

The service begins. There are perhaps seventy-five present, most of them seated in the rows which face each other between the *bimah* and the ark. A small man in a black fur hat mounts the *bimah* and begins the service, but worship is truly congregational. He begins and one after another in the congregation takes over the cantor's role from their place. I have never been at a synagogue where the spirit

was more truly congregational than here.

The chant and the liturgy are Sephardic; the melodies more major in tone and guttural than those with which we are familiar. No one races through the paragraphs. Each is savored. There is no sense of European hurry. They begin by chanting the complete text of *Song of Songs*, which is taken as an allegory of God's love for Israel and Israel's love for God and that sense of loving faith lies lightly on the air.

The building was completed in nineteen forty-nine when this thousand-year old community began to put

(Continued inside)

## SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES

February 17, 1980  
10:30 a.m.  
The Temple Branch

RABBI STUART GELLER

will speak on

CAUTION: LIVING COULD BE  
DANGEROUS FOR YOUR HEALTH

February 24, 1980  
10:30 a.m.  
The Temple Branch

RABBI DAVID HACHEN

will speak on

FUNDAMENTALISM: A RELIGION  
OF HATE — KHOMEINI ET AL

Friday Evening Service — 5:30 to 6:10 — The Temple Chapel  
Sabbath Service — 11:15 a.m. — The Branch



**JOIN US FOR THE MR. AND MRS. CLUB'S  
THIRD ANNUAL SHABBAT DINNER**

February 22—6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. - The Temple Branch

The Shabbat is a time for the family — Celebrate it together with other families.

"Chanale's Sabbath Dress" — A movie for the younger children. Special program for the older children.

Brief family service — Israeli dancing.

Cost: \$4.00 per adult — \$2.00 per child — Under 1 year of age free.

For more information, or to RSVP, call Claudia Folkman at 464-3254.

**VOLUNTEERS OF ALL AGES ARE NEEDED  
TO HELP WITH THE MR. AND MRS. CLUB'S  
ANNUAL PURIM CARNIVAL**

Sunday, March 2, — 2:30 to 6:00 p.m.

We need your help for one hour — for two hours — for as long as you can spare.

If you can be with us, please contact Rabbi Klein at 831-3233!



**FROM THE RABBI'S DESK**

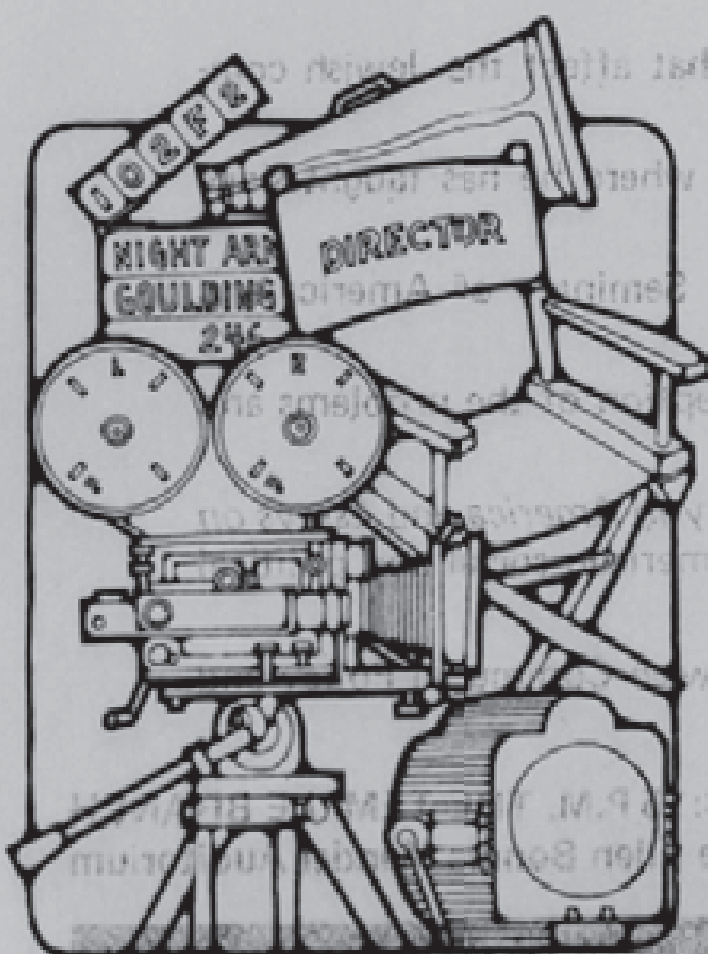
(Continued)

itself together again after the world war. The look is more European than North African. This is Casablanca, a new French city itself, less than a century old, and not one of the immemorial towns of the interior. In true Sephardic fashion, there is no eternal light, but several large glass memorial lights hung high on the front wall, and a small menorah had been lit in a niche on a side wall.

The service lasted an hour. Downstairs there was quiet and involvement, a few quiet signals to the congregant who was to continue with the chant, a quiet greeting to a late arrival. Upstairs Adele reported there was gossip and inattention. This is an Arab place and men and women still live in separate worlds.

The synagogue is well-known and publicly advertised as are synagogues in each of the towns we have visited. These are not marannos. Casablanca has Jewish schools at all levels and a dozen or more synagogues; but, as my host said as we wished each other *shabbat shalom*, "the future is elsewhere."

*Daniel Jeremy Silver*



**THE TEMPLE MEN'S CLUB and THE TEMPLE WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION**  
invite you to

**NOSTALGIC NITE AT THE WADE PARK CINEMA**

Enjoy an evening of Selected Films of the 40's and 50's at . . .

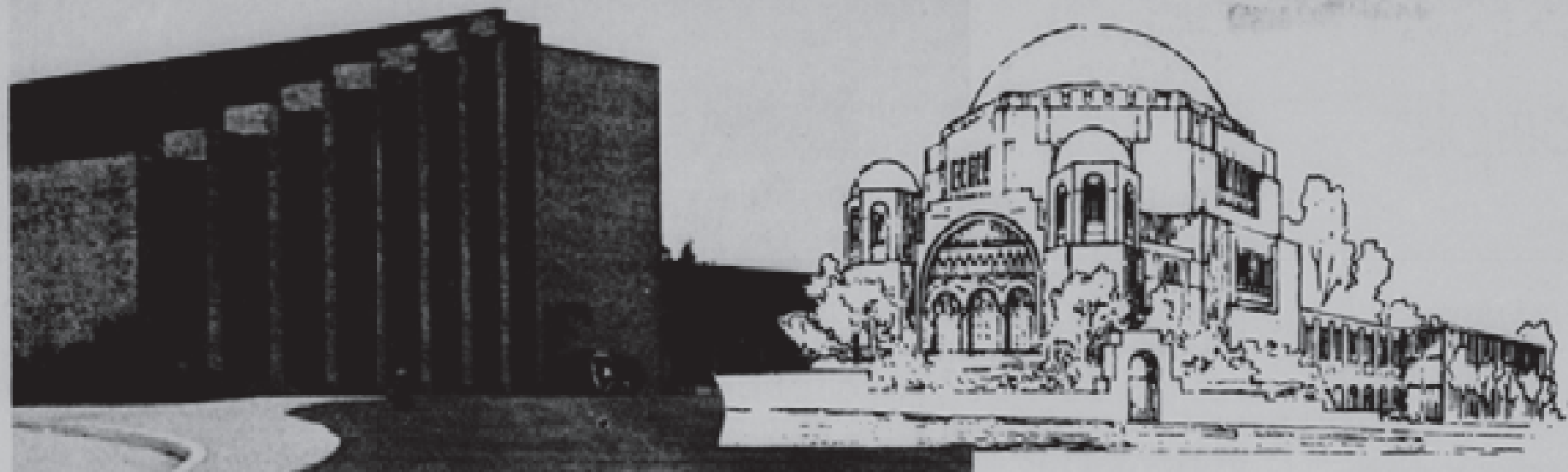
**THE MAIN TEMPLE — University Circle at Silver Park.**

8:30 P.M. — Saturday, February 16

Followed by: Deli Refreshments — sandwiches, snacks, phosphates — also in the true 40's/50's tradition.

Fare: \$1.89 per person — \$3.78 per couple.

For late reservations call The Temple Office — 831-3233.



March 2, 1980  
Vol. LXVI, No. 13

# The Temple Bulletin

## FROM THE RABBI'S TRAVELS:

How does a rabbi spend the Sabbath in Nepal? We looked up the Israeli ambassador and spent a lovely few hours lunching and talking with Shammai Laor and his charming wife, Nura. It is a strange feeling to sense that you could not find a minyan of Jews in this whole country or, for that matter, for a thousand miles in any direction.

Nepal is in the Himalayas or, rather, a series of high valleys nestled in the Himalaya foothills. It is a Hindu kingdom which has the distinction of being the only country besides Israel where Saturday is the day of rest.

What is an Israeli diplomat doing in Nepal? Over the years there have been a number of development projects in which Israel has participated and good relationships have resulted. Nepal was the only Asian country publicly to approve the Camp David accords and one of the few states in this part of the world to maintain full diplomatic relations with Israel. Laor's mission here is primarily concerned with developing and maintaining the openness and understanding which now exists. His is a lonely task but an important one.

Tourism is only a decade or so old in this once locked up kingdom, and de-

velopment has not yet submerged the old ways or brought their naturalness into question. The Hindu gods are still easily worshipped. Sacrifices of goats and chickens as well as of flowers are regularly made. There is a shrine on nearly every block and literally dozens of temples and pagodas in every town. Nepalese woodwork is particularly fine and there is much to please the eye.

I kept thinking as we walked and watched that the Canaanite world out of which the Biblical tradition emerged

must have been in many ways a similar society: colorful, easily religious, idolatrous, full of myth and superstition. These people are obviously comfortable with their pieties and familiar with them; and you sense the wrench that must have been required to separate a nation from pantheism and animism. I have gained new respect for the spiritual vision and courage of our ancestors.

*Daniel Jeremy Silver*

## SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES

March 2, 1980

10:30 a.m.

The Temple Branch

DR. AILEEN KASSEN

will speak on

DESEGREGATION —  
MYTHS AND REALITIES

March 9, 1980

10:30 a.m.

The Temple Branch

DR. DAVID SIDORSKY

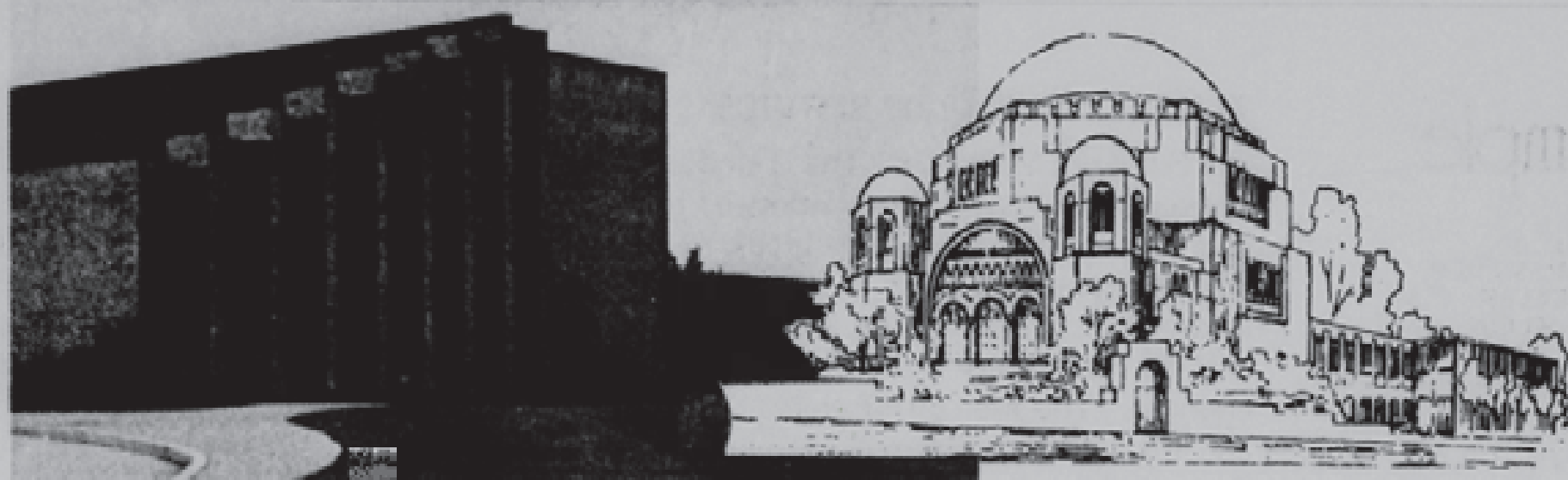
will speak on

JEWISH COMMUNAL POLICY AND  
LIBERALISM: HISTORICAL  
PERSPECTIVES AND NEW  
DIRECTIONS

Friday Evening Service — 5:30 to 6:10 — The Temple Chapel

Sabbath Service — 11:15 a.m. — The Branch





March 16, 1980  
Vol. LXVI, No. 14

# The Temple Bulletin

## FROM THE RABBI'S DESK

Among the folk arts of Thailand, basketry stands out. Using bamboo and rattan, women weave delicate containers of every imaginable type. We have learned to stop and admire. One day we passed a vendor who had dozens of small open work containers of delicate design, each of which, we discovered, enclosed two small birds. It turned out that she was not selling song birds but was in the *mitzvah* business. The birds were tiny swallows and the whole purpose of the transaction was to allow the purchaser to gain merit by buying and freeing the birds. Our Jewish tradition insisted that the reward of the good deed is the deed itself; but few doubted that a sizeable bank account of *mitzvot* would be a help at the Pearly Gates. Theravada Buddhism, Thailand's rather austere version of that wide-ranging faith, sets no great store on Paradise. The goal is to escape from anything that is associated with life in this world or the next; but gaining merit, doing a *mitzvah*, imposes one's chances of coming back in the next life in a holier state from which it may be easier to gain nirvana.

Buddhism is no more or less consistent in its practice than any other faith. The monks teach that the Buddha attacked all forms of magic, but every home here has a little Spirit House. It looks like a doll's house, oriental style, and sits on a raised pedestal in the garden. The Spirit

House contains small clay figures and is believed to be the home of the spirits of that piece of land. Little offerings are left each day to these folk.

Transcending this animistic relic is a strong, spare religious philosophy which insists that peace can be found only when, and if, one frees himself of the attractions and involvements of the familiar world. We must not care for possessions or feelings. To do so is to be caught up in cares which can only bring disappointment. The giant cross-legged Buddha whose image dominates the meditation halls

of every shrine symbolizes this fundamental and unchanging truth.

To Western eyes these Buddha statues are no more or less than idols. Many Buddhists here vigorously deny the charge. They do not pray to the Buddha, or so they say, but meditate on the teachings he offered and which his presence represents.

This is still a profoundly religious culture and a fascinating one to a Westerner because its spiritual goals in many ways are the opposite of our own. We preach commitment. The saffron-robed monks teach withdrawal. We emphasize the preciousness of the

(Continued inside)

## SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES

March 16, 1980

10:30 a.m.

The Temple Branch

THE TEMPLE MEN'S CLUB  
CREATIVE SERVICE

THE FATHER: ECHOES OF THE  
PAST, A FORCE FOR THE  
PRESENT AND THE FUTURE

March 23, 1980

10:30 a.m.

The Temple Branch

DR. BERNARD MARTIN

will speak on

ANCIENT WISDOM FOR MODERN  
MAN: THE RELEVANCE OF  
THE TALMUDIC RABBIS

Friday Evening Service — 5:30 to 6:10 — The Temple Chapel

Sabbath Service — 11:15 a.m. — The Branch

# The Temple

Rabbi  
DANIEL JEREMY SILVER  
STUART GELLER  
STEPHEN A. KLEIN

ALVIN CRONIG . . . . . Executive Secretary  
BETH DWOSKIN . . . . . Librarian  
MONA SENKFOR . . . . . Principal  
DAVID GOODING . . . . . Director of Music

JAMES M. REICH . . . . . President  
CHARLES M. EVANS . . . . . Vice President  
HOMER GUREN . . . . . Vice President  
CLARE SHAW . . . . . Vice President  
BERNARD D. GOODMAN . . . . . Treasurer  
ROBERT GORDON . . . . . Associate Treasurer

LEO S. BAMBERGER . . . . . Exec. Secretary Emeritus  
MIRIAM LEIKIND . . . . . Librarian Emeritus

## COFFEE HOUR HOSTS

Larry and Marilyn Caplane were hosts for the coffee hour preceding the worship service on February 17. Larry is a member of The Temple Board.

Jules and Ruth Vinrey were hosts for the coffee hour preceding the worship service on February 24. Jules is Chairman of the Temple House Committee and a member of The Temple Board.

Dr. James and Betsy Sampliner were hosts for the coffee hour preceding the worship service on March 2. Betsy is a member of The Temple Board.

Dr. Martin and Norma Markowitz are hosts for the coffee hour preceding the worship service today, March 16. Norma is a member of The Temple Board.

Myron and Lucy Eckstein will be hosts for the coffee hour preceding the service on March 23. Lucy is a member of The Temple Board.

## IN MEMORIAM

The Temple notes with sorrow the death of:

Mildred Friedman

and extends heartfelt sympathy to members of the bereaved family.

## TEMPLE MEN'S CLUB SERVICE

On Sunday, March 16, The Temple Men's Club will conduct the service and deliver the sermon. We all know of the stresses and strains upon the family; yet it is still the basic building block of society. The year 1980 has been declared the International Year of the Family, with the hope that through a greater awareness of the realities, and a posing of the proper questions, some answers will be eventually found to help the family through the current crises and changes. The Men's Club has chosen to concentrate its attention on the father and his role in the family. The theme is: "The Father: Echoes of the Past, A Force for the Present and the Future."

Richard Adler, Jr., Saul Eisenberg, Betty Katz, and Alan Zeilinger will conduct the service. Dr. Bernard Cohen, Sherman Hollander, Robert Lustig and Milton Maltz will present special sermonettes on the theme, consisting of a reading by Sholom Aleichem, and materials on current problems. Special music will be provided by Carol Rivchun and Lita Kohn.

## GUESTS IN OUR PULPIT

On Sunday, March 23, Dr. Bernard Martin will be our guest speaker. Dr. Martin, a frequent guest in the pulpit, is Abba Hillel Silver Professor of Jewish Studies at Case Western Reserve University, and Chairman of the Department of Religion. His topic will be "Ancient Wisdom For Modern Man: The Relevance Of The Talmudic Rabbis."

## TEMPLE SENIORS ACTIVITIES FUND

During the past year, there have been a number of highly successful programs for our older congregants. There have been speakers, movies, and musical presentations; and numerous other activities are planned for the future. The Temple has helped to subsidize these programs for our members. However, several members have already made contributions towards the continuation of such activities. Therefore, we are establishing a new fund, "The Temple Seniors Activities Fund." Anyone wishing to make a contribution to this fund, should contact The Temple office.

## ALTAR FLOWERS

The flowers which grace The Temple altar are delivered by members of The Temple Women's Association to members who are hospitalized.

Friday, March 21 in memory of Gertrude Loveman Jaskulek by her children Irene and Fred Heiber and Betty and Marc Jaskulek and grandchildren; also in memory of Frank H. Fox by her wife Bertha and children Herbert and Harriet Bressman; also in memory of Harold M. Strauss by his wife Clara; also in memory of Irving R. Schumann by his family; also in

## FROM THE RABBI'S DESK:

(Continued)

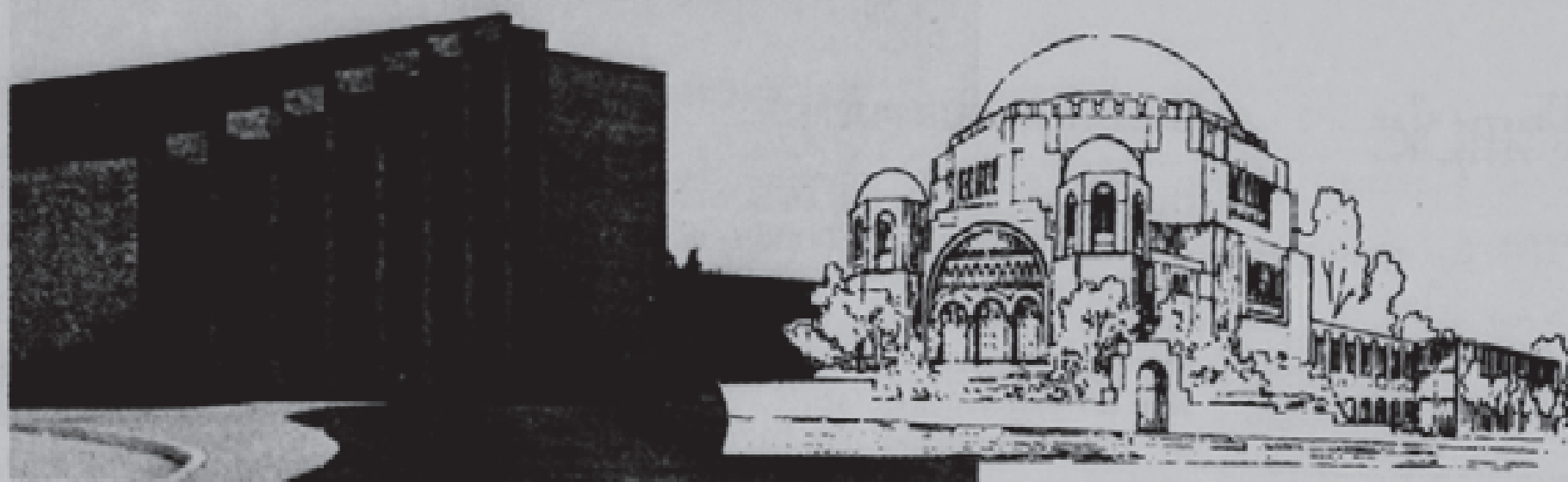
moment. They emphasize the need to be indifferent to time. We say sanctify and enjoy that which is permitted to you. They say that the ultimate goal is the monastery and the beggar's bowl.

Being here has been a broadening experience even though I didn't buy the merit of freeing the birds. Somehow, the whole process was a bit too mechanical.

*Daniel Jeremy Silver*

memory of Herman J. Reich by his children Barbara and James Reich, Doris and Henry C. Shapoff and Marcy and Howard Schreiber. Sunday, March 23 in memory of Sidney N. Weitz by his children Elizabeth and Jared Faulb and Louis E. Weitz. Friday, March 28 in memory of beloved father Sumner C. Wiener by Ethel and Allyn D. Kendis; also in memory of Dr. Harry J. Riemer by his wife Jeanette, daughter Elayn Klang and son Steven; also in memory of Helen G. Sterns by her husband Louis D. Sterns, children Corinne and Leonard Schwartz, and grandchildren.





March 30, 1980  
Vol. LXVI, No. 15

# The Temple Bulletin

## FROM THE RABBI'S DESK

One element of Asian life which cannot be underestimated is the power of religious faith. The West was shocked by Iran and the Ayotollah Khoumeini; we should not have been. Religion represents a people's certification of the value of their way of life and the vision of the future. When these are questioned or threatened the reaction can be a violent one.

Thailand is a Buddhist country. In every village there is a temple-monastery. Saffron-robed monks and novices can be seen everywhere. Thailand forbids the exportation of any Buddha image, although there are hundreds of thousands of these. It is not a question of preserving the nation's antiquities but a feeling that any representation of Buddha should be viewed with respect and not as a knick-knack. Much of the unwillingness of the Thai to absorb any of the Lao or Cambodian refugees is that they would bring alien religious forms into the nation.

Malaysia designates itself an Islamic state though only a bare majority of the Malays are Muslim. Incidentally, we have thought so much about the Arab Middle East that many of us are surprised that the three most populous Muslim states are in Asia: Indonesia, Malaysia and India.

In Malaysia the Muslim majority is doing all that it can to unsettle the economic position of the Chinese and Indians and to missionize the Koranic tradition. Mohammed's birthday was celebrated with firecrackers, parades and the speeches of politicians, all underlying the promise of the

Muslim future of the country. There was massive enthusiasm.

A day later the Indians of Malaysia, Hindus all, mostly Tamil, began their Festival of Thaipusan. I have never seen anything like it. It is a festival during which vows are repaid to the gods and guilt is expiated by painful acts of devotion. Men and women spent a week of spiritual preparation in their temples and then, on the holiday, carry spiked head gear on their shoulders or drive iron barbs through their lips or put meat hooks into their back and walk in procession for miles to the local shrine. The devotees are obviously high on faith and, perhaps, on some drugs. There are clearly exhibitionists among them, but there are also simple folk who are being helped along by their families and gaining merit from this primitive rite of expiation. All along the way friends are dressed up in their best saris and clothes, greet them and assist. I have rarely seen a ritual which was so obviously painful and so welcome. I confess I could not watch for more than a few minutes, though the procession lasted for hours.

The architecture of their shrines reveals one of the most striking differences between Hinduism and Buddhism. Hindu shrines are temples and nothing more. They are places for worship. The Buddhist temples are schools as well as shrines. They are halls for meditation and areas for instruction. There are libraries. Every shrine has a school to which young-

(Continued inside)

## SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES

March 30, 1980  
10:30 a.m.

The Temple Branch  
Dr. Donald Freedheim  
will speak on  
**CHILDHOOD: TERMINABLE  
OR INTERMINABLE**

April 6, 1980  
10:30 a.m.

The Temple Branch  
Dr. Bernard Martin  
will speak on  
**OBSTACLES TO BELIEVING  
IN GOD**

## PASSOVER SERVICES FIRST DAY OF PASSOVER

April 1, 1980  
10:30 a.m.

The Temple Branch  
**HEBREW GRADUATION**  
Robert Marc Felber  
Jay Andrew Friedman  
Steven Craig Hartman  
Andrew Roy Hertz  
Michael Aaron Jaffe  
Elizabeth Katz  
Cynthia Holly Miller  
Steven Jonathan Singer

## LAST DAY OF PASSOVER April 7, 1980

10:30 a.m.

The Temple Branch  
Rabbi Stephen A. Klein  
will speak on

**ASKING THE RIGHT  
QUESTIONS**

Friday Evening Service  
5:30 to 6:10 p.m.  
The Temple Chapel

# First Friday

APRIL 4, 1980

## SOVIET POLICY AND AMERICAN STRATEGY FOR THE FUTURE

Dr. Richard Pipes

- An expert on Russian history and contemporary affairs, Dr. Richard Pipes brings a keen and critical eye to bear on modern Soviet policy.
- Dr. Pipes received his Ph.D. in History from Harvard University, where he is the Frank B. Baird, Jr., Professor of History.
- He has served as Director of the Russian Research Center of Harvard University, Senior Research Consultant of the Strategic Studies Center of Stanford Research Institute, and Senior Research Consultant for the Advanced International Studies Institute.
- Dr. Pipes is a member of the Editorial Board of *Strategic Review*, *Comparative Strategy*, and *Ethnicity*, and has won numerous awards and distinctions.
- He was chairman of a U. S. government committee to review national intelligence estimates, and serves on numerous committees which focus upon foreign relations, international policy, and strategic planning.
- A prolific author and editor, Dr. Richard Pipes will bring his insight to bear on Soviet policy, and its relations to American strategy for the future. The issues are in all the headlines; Dr. Pipes will help us to read behind these headlines.



### KIDDUSH and CANDLE LIGHTING

Admission by ticket only — Mail reservations early

8:15 P.M. THE TEMPLE BRANCH

The Ellen Bonnie Mandel Auditorium

### FROM THE RABBI'S DESK: (Continued)

sters come for religious education in the form of a three to four-month novitiate. I thought of the comparison between the synagogue schools, the shuls, of medieval Europe and Europe's churches which had only the worship function.

When I talk about religion I have been troubled sometimes helping students understand that in its basic form religion is the way a society organizes and expresses its sense of redemption. Not all religions have understood the importance of teaching their congregants about ethics and providing them with a philosophic understanding about life. I'm glad ours has.

*Daniel Jeremy Silver*

### SAVE THE DATE

for the

### TEMPLE MEN'S CLUB QUAD-TEMPLE EVENING

Wednesday, April 16th at

The Temple Branch

Details to follow . . .

but mark your calendars now!



Several years ago the Central Conference of American Rabbis published a new Passover Haggadah, which has a highly readable text and lovely illustrations. They are available for purchase from The Temple office at \$7.50 per copy.





JUNE 22, 1980  
Vol. LXVI, No. 19

# The Temple Bulletin

## PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT — 1980

This year was an unusual one for the Temple due to Rabbi Silver's absence on his Sabbatical leave for almost seven months. Although he was greatly missed, the life of The Temple went on. The needs of our members were attended to and services were conducted by Rabbi Klein and Rabbi Geller in a very professional manner. Sunday morning sermons were delivered by several of our own members, Rabbi Bernard Martin and other outstanding community leaders. The fact that everything went so smoothly was to a great extent due to the very thorough preparation and planning of Rabbi Silver during the months before his departure.

Our Temple seniors program is completing its first full year, and it has proven to be one of the most successful projects we have launched in many years. Designed as a program of activities for our older members, it is planned and administered by our Temple Seniors Committee. Sanford Sugarman is the very able chairman of the committee, which is made up of mostly Temple seniors. Rabbi Stephen Klein is the advisor and coordinator of the program. During the past year bi-monthly programs were held at the Branch. Most programs consisted of a morning lecture or movie, luncheon and then a musical program after lunch. An integral part of each day's activities was the provision of rides for those who could not provide their own transportation. Average attendance at these programs was about 100, and the "Enjoyment Level" was very high!

Another aspect of the Temple Seniors project is the telephone reassurance program which was initiated this year. Seniors who live alone and wish to be called on a regular basis to chat receive calls from one of our member volunteers.

The Seniors Program is almost self supporting from the nominal admission and luncheon fee that is charged. Some additional funds are needed to make up the shortfall, and so The Temple Seniors Fund has been established. This is a regular Temple Fund to which you can contribute to honor or memorialize a friend or loved one.

Construction of our new kitchen proceeded during most of the year, and was finally completed a few weeks ago. Although it took somewhat longer to build than originally planned, it is a handsome and completely equipped facility which will serve our congregation well for many years. The cost of construction and equipment was obtained from the proceeds of the Maskit Project and our mortgage redemption campaign funds. The Temple Women's Association has made a very significant gift to The Temple of a complete service of dishes and silverware for the kitchen. I am pleased to express the gratitude of the Temple to the T.W.A. for this generous gift. I also wish to convey appreciation to Charles Evans and Homer Guren, Chairman and Co-Chairman of the Kitchen Building Committee, and the members of the committee, for a job well done.

Major repairs at the Main Temple became necessary during the year. The roof over the Social Hall was replaced and the Social Hall was completely redecorated because roof leaks had caused deterioration of the ceiling and floor. The Main Temple is now 56 years old and is in remarkably good condition for its age. We have spent substantial money from our capital funds during the past two years to refurbish various sections of the building, and it is now in the best condition in many years. Our two major tenants in the school wing at the Main Temple provide us with sufficient income to



JAMES M. REICH

operate it without causing a drain on our operating budget. We continue to use the building on a daily basis for our Administrative Offices, Library, Museum, Friday Vesper Services, Saturday Bar/Bat Mitzvah Services, High Holiday and Confirmation Services, receptions and parties and other special events. The Main Temple is a great asset to our congregation and a national historic landmark. It is important that we maintain it and continue to use it well.

Our Temple programming this year maintained its customary high standards. During the fall the Mr. and Mrs. Club sponsored the Fourth Annual Coping Series, on the theme of parenthood. This was a six part lecture series by outstanding child psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers and Rabbi Klein.

First Friday provided some of the highlights of the year. The Bon Voyage and Welcome Home parties

(continued on next page)



September 21, 1980  
Vol. LXVII, No. 2

# The Temple Bulletin

## FROM THE RABBI'S DESK:

I am a bit puzzled and troubled. I have noticed that an increasing number of families insert a No Visitation notice in the funeral announcement; and when I ask about their closed door policy, I discover that they really do not mean it. They tell me that they want to avoid the perfunctory visit, not to be inundated by people they scarcely know, and not to have the *shivah* take on the aspect of a party. Unfortunately, that is not what the notice says, and there are those, like myself, who believe that an English sentence means what it says. How are we to know what you really had in mind?

"No Visitation" often keeps away those whom we would most like to have come. A good friend takes you at your word.

"No Visitation" keeps friends away when we most need them. When we suffer we need to unblock our feelings and the best way to do this is to talk and to cry on someone's shoulder. As the world comes into our home we are pulled back into life. Those who close the door often find it stuck shut when

they want to open it again. They get accustomed to a self-defeating inferiority which makes it hard ever to welcome another into the intimacy of their lives. When we're hurt we feel frightened and terribly alone, and the presence of friends assures us that others do care and that the world is not against us.

The practice of visiting friends during the *shivah* period is an old and valued tradition. According to Genesis, Joseph mourned for seven days after his father's death. Job's friends came to call. Customs do not survive the centuries unless they are emotionally and psychologically functional. The *shivah* has survived because it is not healthy to nurse one's wounds in private. In grief all our reactions become particularly intense. We've been bruised. We are angry: "How could this happen to me?" It's a difficult period at best, and when we break the ritual forms, Judaism's mourning etiquette, we multiply the chances that another's actions may hurt us at a time when we are prone to blow up imagined hurts into elephantine proportions. *Shivah's* rules help our community of friends navigate a difficult

passage. They know what is expected and we know what to expect.

Am I wrong that families show just a touch of selfishness when they bar the gates as if they are the only people who have been hurt by a death? We live a good part of our lives outside the home; and, in the process, we develop many close relationships. I have seen a grieving family encouraged and consoled by the visit of folk they had never met whose lives had been redeemed by a kindness or a gift of which the family was unaware.

"No Visitation" is a Dead End sign. It tells you not to proceed; but not how to proceed. It complicates a difficult period by introducing guesswork and uncertainty. It signals a willingness to come back to life and a misunderstanding of community. Need I add that you are not obliged to provide food and drink. Quite to the contrary: *shivah* is a time when friends bring in food. The alternative of "No Visitation" is not an Open House but the decency and healing of a *shivah* visit.

*Daniel Jeremy Silver*



## THE RABBI'S SERMONS — HIGH HOLY DAYS 1980

### ROSH HASHANAH — SEPT. 10

Rosh Hashanah is known in the Torah by a number of names. Perhaps the best known of these is *Yom ha-din*, the Day of Judgment. Originally, the idea seems to have been that God judges His Creation on the anniversary of Creation. The ancients believed that this world had been made, would be destroyed and a new world would be ordered into being. Each anniversary of the first day was a day of fear and trembling since no one knew whether creation matched up to God's expectations and would be allowed to continue.

Over the centuries our people elaborated a folk myth based on this concept of *Yom ha-din*, the Day of Judgment. In it we were asked to conjure up an image of the Heavenly Court. God sat as the presiding Judge. In turn each mortal was brought before the bar. A ministering angel read out from a ledger in which the record of each life was inscribed. The proceeding was designed to determine each person's fate for the next year.

Sentence was not immediately pronounced. Judaism is not a fatalistic tradition. The purpose of this parable was not to convince us that our fate was sealed; but to encourage us to develop strict ethical disciplines. We were asked to use our imagination and conjure up our feelings if we stood in that court before God and someone actually read out an unvarnished chronicle of our lives, free of the excuses, rationalizations and justifications with which we normally embroider our diary. Presumably, we would recognize clearly the gap between how we had lived and how we ought to have lived; and, moved by remorse, we would resolve to strengthen our moral disciplines. God's purpose is not our punishment but our reform. These themes are beautifully summed up in the *U'netaneh Tokef*, one of the grand hymns sung during the High Holidays: "On Rosh Hashanah it is written. On the fast of Yom Kippur it is sealed; who shall live and who shall die. Who shall be brought low and who shall be exalted. But repentance, prayer and righteous living can avert a harsh sentence."

The rabbis illustrated these classic themes in many ways. A favorite story of mine tells of an otherwise little known Hasidic rebbe, Mordecai of Nadvorna. The story goes that on the day before Rosh Hashanah Mordecai saw his cantor hastening to his study. "Why are you hurrying?" "I must set my prayers in order. Rosh Hashanah is tomorrow." To which the rabbi replied: "The prayer book this year is the same as it was last year. Better look into your deeds and set your life into right order."

Mordecai of Nadvorna lived in the shtetl, which is to say that he lived in a coherent cultural world. The Torah was the sole curriculum of its schools and the *halacha* regulated the pattern of people's lives. When the rabbi told his cantor: "Set your life in right order", the cantor knew exactly what the rabbi meant. Community standards were clear. But the times have changed. If by some miracle I were to find one of you hurrying home on the day before Rosh Hashanah to set your prayers in order and we had this same colloquy; you might well say to me: "Set my life in order? Order. What order? What is the precise right order by which I should govern my life?" Our culture is fragmented. There

is the religious school and there is the public school. There is the home and there is the street. The media present a wide range of conflicting attitudes. There is no longer a clear understanding of what constitutes the proper way.

We have grown used to the prevailing confusion. We were born into a fragmented culture and have lived among changing styles of life and changing relationships since birth. Generally, we manage to cope with our children and grandchildren when they adopt styles of life which are unfamiliar to us and even with our occasional urge to break out of long-familiar and conventional patterns.

Last year, as you know, I went on a sabbatical. I was away for about half a year. When I came back I was struck rather sharply by a sense that the prevailing confusion had deepened and had led to a paralysis of will. America no longer seemed able to act. A lethargy was abroad in the land that I had not been conscious of before.

I came back during the primaries. No one seemed excited about any of the major candidates. None of them seemed able to lift up a vision of the country that could give us pride or purpose, nor had they successfully described a realizable program which would allow us to resolve the many problems which face the nation. I came back to a grumbling and complaining community. In almost every conversation people were putting down the candidates and the political process.

People seemed to be treating the campaign as a game, and to have resigned themselves to the role of a spectator. It was as if they were watching a baseball or football game on television. It didn't bother them that the words spoken by the candidate had been written by somebody else to entice their vote rather than to affirm the candidate's position. Many seemed intrigued by the technical skill of the professionals who prepared the thirty or sixty second spots for television. Game plans were evaluated and graded and points were given on technical proficiency. What I did not find was any sense of outrage at the patent hypocrisy of the process and little sense that this was not a game but an election whose outcome would affect all our lives. We watched one primary until the vote was taken and then went about our business until we would watch the next contest several weeks later. It was like Monday night football. Every week another game. We were interested to know which team would score the most points, who would garner the most votes; but there was no sense, really, that what was happening was of utmost consequence to our future. We were spectators. If nobody could tell us exactly what was the right order for the country, we would watch but not participate. "I'll show them. I won't vote."

This lethargy, this paralysis of the will, seems to be America's dominant mood. Our embassy was taken in Teheran together with fifty-three hostages. What was our response? Nobody had a satisfactory plan, so we satisfied ourselves by listening to someone intone nightly on the news: "This is the 312th day of captivity", and went on to other things. We had become spectators.

When Mr. Castro opened his doors and dumped on our shores some whom we were delighted to wel-

come and others whom we did not want, no one had a plan. So we watched the news. We did nothing. We were spectators.

When the Russians invaded Afghanistan our response again was a spectator's response, a negative response. We would not send our athletes to the Olympics.

When Iranian students rioted in our streets, no one had a plan; so we watched the riots and the police restraints on television and did nothing. We were spectators. Passive.

Passivity is a strange mood for a country that prided itself once on being a can-do nation, and for a people who delighted to call themselves pragmatic: "present us a problem, we'll find a solution. We're up and coming, on the way." Not this year. We watched inflation. We watched unemployment. No one proposed a 'New Deal.'

I met a man this summer who told me that he was playing golf every day because there was no point in going to his factory. There was no business. He had resources. He also had laid off half of his employees. But he was not out there pounding the streets, looking for business. He had accepted passively the recession.

When lethargy and disorientation are abroad you can be sure that the country is going through a difficult passage. In this mood people cry out for a strong hand at the helm. They want someone whose energy and confidence will make them feel that he will bring them through. Better a false hope than none at all. In a strange way it is fortunate that the man who occupies the White House is a man who would look awkward seated on a white horse.

But America seemed not to be searching for a leader. We did not seem to have even that much active energy. Indeed, such motion as there has been these past months have been inward, a turning away, a search for the immediacy of religious experience. Christian evangelism has ceased to be a sub-culture. The born-again are abroad in the land. An immediate experience of God can be transforming. Such an experience can make you feel that your tradition is the right one and that its decencies will help keep your balance through confusing times. Clearly many need to feel that their values were solid and right.

In America evangelism has been politically passive; but this year the ranks of the born-again spawned, a politically active right-wing whose professed aim is to reestablish a national sense of moral order. They are determined to staunch the confusion, what they call the permissiveness, of our society; and to return our communities to older and stabler values. Unfortunately, the most politically active branch of this revival-oriented community, the so-called New Majority, tends in its strategies to be relatively impatient with traditional constitutional safeguards and guarantees of personal freedom. They plan to overcome the eroticism, the materialism and the permissiveness of American society by imposing an older order based largely, it appears, on the values preached in small-town America at the turn of the century. This movement seeks to defeat the Equal Rights Amendment. Why? So that women will know the nation encourages

them to take their rightful places as wives and as mothers. It demands that all homosexuals be removed from the public schools and from government office. Why? That children shall have only acceptable role models. It demands that prayer and Genesis be taught again in the public schools as symbols that the schools will teach Christian values rather than secularist ones. They want to Christianize the public school curriculum, though they use the word more in a cultural than in a religious sense. They are for marriage, parental responsibility, honesty, discipline and the work ethic, and they want to make sure that library shelves are full of books full of good standards and moral uplift.

In many ways I sympathize with those who cry out against the indecencies of modern life. Modern life is vulgar and discordant. The city is violent. All of us have felt in our souls the temptations of self-indulgence and the lure of a life free of restraints; and most of us have known or loved someone who was swept away by one of the permissive tides of our times.

But Puritanism is not the way. Watch and Ward societies will not work in our pluralistic society. Nineteenth-century, small-town American life does not provide the noble model it is held out to be. There was the right side of the track. All blacks and poor were on the wrong side of the track. Christians controlled the town and Jews knew their place. There were a few of great wealth but most were without social welfare and there was no support besides alms for those who were thrown out of work. Some of the formal ties of family were strong, but many believed that morality involved the double standard. In any case, we cannot turn back the clock.

We should have learned from Prohibition, if from nothing else, that you can't impose moral order from above, at least not if you prize your freedoms.

I spent part of last spring in a well-ordered society. I assure you that if a member of the Communist Party of the People's Republic of China were to say to any citizen of China, 'set your house in order', that citizen would know exactly what the Party member meant. Everybody has a place and everybody is in his place. He is indoctrinated in the right order at school. He is reminded constantly of the right order by the media. If he steps out of line the Party cadre in his commune reeducates him forcefully. I was in China during a time which the press described as a period of liberalization. If by liberalization the press meant that millions of people were no longer being forced from the city to the countryside by the forces of the Cultural Revolution, they were right. But if the press meant that the Chinese people were free in the slightest degree, they were dead wrong. The poster walls had been taken down. Some poor fellow who had been running a small mimeograph in a basement in Peking and had published a broadside or two of minor complaint against the government was sentenced in a nationally televised trial to life at hard labor. New rules were being promulgated to keep Chinese away from foreigners and foreign ideas.

Shall our response to the confusions of our time and the consequent lethargy and loss of will be the imposition of moral regulations. I hope not. Such an order can be imposed only at the price of valued freedoms.

There is another way to escape from lethargy. It will begin when we accept a degree of disorder, of freedom, as part of God's will. We rarely think about it, but God built disorder, freedom, into Creation.

Rosh Hashanah celebrates creation. At Creation God made each species according to its kind. A lion is a lion is a lion. A lion is a creature of instinct. There are tall lions and small lions. There are brown lions and tawny lions, but a lion always will act in a certain way. He can't do otherwise. Adam and Eve were created singly. Each of us is created with a unique gene pool, unique talents, and with the ability to master our instincts. We have judgment and we have will. God would not have created this area of freedom for man, I firmly believe, if He had not been satisfied that we could handle a large degree of disorder, if He had not known that out of freedom and disorder civilization would develop. Color Russia gray; color China blue; color the West every hue of the rainbow. Here we have the clash of ideas, the clash of costumes and the clash of customs; and out of the mixing and mingling comes the new ideas and perspectives out of which civilization emerges.

Disorder is part of life, but obviously there have to be limits. Freedom and license are not synonymous. If God created man in a condition of freedom and disorder, He also gave us instruction, the Torah, which would enable us to live successfully and peacefully together. The Torah does not present a blueprint of utopia. The Torah does not say: these are the kinds of schools you must have; these are the kinds of political structures you must organize; this is the kind of culture that must be developed. What the Torah presents are commandments, *mitzvot*, the obligations of human life, the standards by which we can take our freedom and use it constructively. The Torah is a rule for a people on the way. As a matter of fact, the Torah stops with the death of Moses on the far side of the Jordan and describes Jewish history only up to the point when Jews began to settle in the Holy Land. The Commandments govern human relationships. They do not prescribe fixed and immutable goals.

The American Academy of Arts and Sciences publishes a quarterly magazine which they call *Daedalus*. Each issue is devoted to a given theme. This summer's issue was devoted to the theme, "The End of Consensus", which was their way of describing the end of the sense of coherence in American life. The editor, Stephen Graubart, wrote in his introductory essay: "We find ourselves overwhelmed by problems. We seem suddenly deprived of the capacity to imagine or construct vital new institutions or to revitalize those already in existence." Graubart attributed this lack of will and the inability to imagine new institutions to what he called "our moral disarray."

I respectfully disagree. To be sure a few have been carried away by radical ideologies, but most of us know exactly what are the correct and proper standards of human behavior. We know what the Torah teaches. We know what the Ten Commandments are. We know that we must respect ourselves and show equal respect for others. We know that we must be careful stewards of the gift of life, of the gift of our talents, and of the gift of the good earth. We know that we must fulfill ourselves and at the same time be useful to our community. We know that our word must be good and our work must be

sound. We know that we need to be generous, empathetic and sympathetic. We know what is morally right. We do not suffer from a failure of knowledge but from a failure of will. We are waiting for somebody to come along to tell us exactly what we must do. If a rabbi says to us: "Set your life in order"; we tell him: "I don't know what the order is and my ignorance excuses me from doing anything. I don't know the right political solutions for these problems, so I won't vote. I don't know what America should do about the Middle East, so I won't read the newspapers. I'm no economist so I'll play golf."

When we were twelve or thirteen few of us knew what our lives would be like. At that age I wanted to be a fireman. I could not have laid out for you a blueprint of my life. Life is an unfolding. You begin. You go to school. Ideas strike you. Talents appear. You begin to discipline your talents. You meet certain people who encourage you along certain lines. Opportunities present themselves and suddenly you're in life; but you have to begin.

What is true of the individual is true of the society. There is no solution to the energy crisis, but the country must make a beginning. We can turn down our thermostats and buy smaller cars. We can encourage government expenditure for research into new energy sources. There are a number of things which can be done and, somehow, once we begin, once we are in motion, solutions present themselves. But you must be in motion. Nothing happens if you stand still.

If I were to offer any motto for the new year it would be the first words that God spoke to the first Jew, Abraham. He told Abraham: *Lech lecha*, "get going." Don't sit around grumbling and complaining. It's not the candidate's fault. Get going. Abraham must have said to God: "Where should I go?" Show me a blueprint. Give me precise directions. God does not. He told Abraham only: *El-ha aretz asher ar'echa*, "get going and somehow along the way you'll find out where I'm leading you." We have to begin without knowing our final destination or even many of the way stations. So far this sounds almost as if it were a Vince Lombardy locker room lecture: "when the going gets tough, the tough must get going." But God did not leave it there. The sentence continues: "get going, somehow along the way you'll discover where you're going, and whatever you do, every day of your life, *He-yeh veracha*, "be a blessing." I'm not advocating pushing people aside or plunging headlong into life. Not at all. I'm talking about serious concerns with the serious problems of our private and national life and about sensitivity to the consequences of our decisions.

You are not a blessing when you push others aside so you can make your way. You are not a blessing when you manipulate others out of an urgent desire to be successful. You are not a blessing when you are so eager for profit or pleasure that you forget your children or your spouse. You are not a blessing when you twist truth and go back on your word because it is to your advantage. You are not a blessing when you complain about our elective system and do not involve yourself in the civic life. Get going. Be a blessing the whole day. Many who are useful public citizens have home lives which are disasters. Many whose home life are full of love and decency are disasters as public citizens. The demand is for a full engagement of your energies.



Get going. Set out on the way without knowing everything about the way and be a blessing.

Let me add a word as a rabbi. I am struck by the fact that we have learned about the importance of reinforcement in almost every area of our lives except the most important. No one would dare to play the piano publicly without having practiced and perfected the program. No athlete would attempt to win a race without having practiced for days before the meet. Every competent professional organizes his time so that he can read all that is new and relevant to his work. When we try to break bad habits we value the reinforcement of those who, like us, are trying to control an unwanted addiction. But when it comes to the spirit and conscience we think that the lessons of childhood are all we need and that we can live effectively and sensitively without reinforcement.

I am convinced that one of the reasons so many seem to be paralyzed, lethargic, is that they have run out of steam. Yes, we went to Sunday School, but that was a long time ago. Now we find ourselves out in the cold and, more often than not, confused. A hundred voices have come at us with a hundred different ideas. We have found ourselves in unexpected situations. Yet, we walked on believing that the few moralisms we learned as children and an occasional coming to High Holiday services would carry us through. No one gave us a road map and many gave us conflicting directions.

We were misled, seduced and simply confused and along the way we lost our way.

When we were children we learned all the lessons about good and bad, about right and wrong, about the Ten Commandments, about what we must do. Then we went out into the world where we were bruised, confused, enticed and seduced. Out in the world any number of conflicting messages came our way. We tried many values. One thing we did not do, most of us, was to develop a routine of worship, home observance, and Torah study which would allow us to touch base from time to time and to remind ourselves of the basic standards Torah teaches and represents. The religious worship, home observance, Torah study, were not invented by rabbis or priests or ministers to keep themselves employed. These disciplines exist because we require moments when we can touch base, remind ourselves of the right and the good, and think over how to be right in a particular situation.

In every synagogue there is an ark. In every ark there is a Torah. In every Torah there are the commandments. Right and wrong do not have to be spelled out for you. You know what they are. You know what the Torah represents. Just being here reminds you of it. But how many minutes a year do we spend in disciplines which remind us of the moral and spiritual foundations of our lives, and which allow us to pull back from a world which is pulling us apart and return to a coherent world

where we can pull ourselves together again and become whole?

We need from time to time to come home. Most of us live in the world of future shock all but two days a year. In on Rosh Hashanah, out on Yom Kippur, is an old story among Jews. We almost take perverse pride in our lack of piety. Let's forget the word piety. Let's talk about character. Let's talk about our ability to act responsibly. Let me say it simply. If you want to be more active, more responsible, more sensitive, more generous and more aware of your possibility as a human being, then come back from time to time and touch base with the tradition's teachings. Keep yourself together.

In university courses we define religion as that cluster of ideas, institutions, hopes, rituals and myth which allow the human being to pull his or her life together and give it a sense of meaning. That's what Judaism can do for you. It allows you to pull together the fragmented parts of your life. It gives you a sense that you're standing on solid ground. You learn again that what is right is right; that it is important to speak the truth; to love; to live up to your marriage vows; to be careful in the upbringing of your children. These are the critical virtues. That is what worship, Torah study, and home observance, can do for you.

Life is not a spectator sport. Life is always diffi-

cult, but it is particularly demanding in an age like ours when so many options and opportunities exist and so many moral decisions must be made because all the structures by which we organize human relationships are in flux. But there is absolutely no reason to feel sorry for ourselves. Most people on earth would gladly exchange places with us. We are citizens of the freest country on earth. We are citizens of the most prosperous and powerful country on earth. Every opportunity is there and freedom is ours. The one thing that I discovered, as I said to you when I first came home, was that I did not find a single person out there who would not have exchanged his passport for mine.

Yes, there is future shock. Yes, there is confusion. Yes, our children say things we do not quite understand and we are not sure that we approve of. Yes, we feel the blandishments of prosperity and of indolence, but you know what to do about it. You have known the rules all your life.

Take your life in hand. Discipline yourself to be active and committed. God never promised you leisure. God has provided you a worthwhile challenge. Take it. Don't complain. Get going. Don't ask me where you are going, I don't know. Get going. And whatever you do, every day of your life think of others, add to the sum total of human happiness. Be a blessing.

## YOM KIPPUR — SEPTEMBER 19

Yom Kippur is clothed in white. The pulpit is dressed in white. The *parochet*, the curtain in front of the ark is white. The Torah scrolls are mantled in white. In ancient times not only were the furniture and the fabric of the synagogue decked in white but there was the sense of whiteness in the congregation. The nearly-all-white prayer shawl, the *tallit*, which is normally worn only during a morning service was worn Kol Nidre night during worship. In the medieval synagogue men wore a garment called a *kittel*. The *kittel* is a flowing white robe which covered worshippers from their necks to their feet. No wonder then that our people came to call Yom Kippur the Great White Fast.

Since religion must speak to the heart, it must use not only words but the logic of melody and the logic of ritual and symbol. Obviously, the white is a symbol. As a symbol what does it signify?

Being westerners we instinctively associate white with purity and innocence. The Romans dressed their Vestal Virgins in white. White is still the color of the wedding gown. In medieval paintings angels were clothed in flowing white robes. Until recently all medical personnel were dressed in white, not that garments of other colors cannot be cleaned with equal thoroughness; but physicians understood that we associate white with cleanliness and purity, and they wanted to make us feel comfortable.

The problem with this association is that our religious tradition does not lift up purity as a God-mandated attainment. Purity is beyond our reach.

The Torah says it directly: "There is no one on earth so righteous that he sins not." The prototypical couple, Adam and Eve, were given a single commandment, not to eat of the forbidden fruit; and they could not resist. The book of Proverbs is equally direct: "perverse is the heart in all things and desperately weak." Next year's Yom Kippur is already scheduled and all of us will be able to say that day, as we said tonight: "We are not so presumptuous and stiff-necked as to say before you that we have not sinned, for verily we have sinned. We have sinned. We have transgressed. We have done perversely."

Angels are creations of the imagination and we have imagined them without ego or libido. They can be colored white. The human is a complex creature. God made us so. Color us gray. Sometimes by discipline we can lighten the gray, but we can never completely remove the darker hues; and, I suspect, that God did not intend it otherwise.

A delightful midrash describes the sixth day of Creation. On that day God began to have second thoughts about Adam. Should He create the human being? He summoned the senior angels to a conclave. The angel Love said, "Go ahead. Man will be caring and passionate. He will love and be loved." The angel Mercy agreed; "Go ahead. At times man will be great-hearted and charitable. Create Adam." The angel Truth disagreed and described in detail all the failings and sins of which we have shown ourselves capable. What did God do? God took the Angel Truth, ejected him from Heaven and went ahead and created man. God must have known what He was doing.

There are, to be sure, religious traditions which

establish purity as the ultimate human goal. Buddhism, Hinduism and monastic Christianity assume that we are made of two different kinds of stuff. There is the body and there is the soul. Our body is of the earth. The spirit is divine. According to these teachings the goal of life is to free that which is pure, the soul, from its prison in the impure. These traditions suggest that this be accomplished by mortification of the flesh, by vigils, by fasting and by a life of celibacy and denial. There have been among Jews individuals and groups who were attracted to the ascetic life. There are always people who are deeply disturbed by the vulgarity and the passion of their age and who find they cannot handle their emotions and feelings unless they suppress them. But the basic tendency of Jewish life has been to accept the human being as a unitary creature who is as God intended him. We know that we will fall and fall again. The question is have we the strength to rise up and push onward.

The Hasidim told a story of one of their noble *tzadikim*, righteous men, Levi Yitzhak of Berdichev. At one point during the contemplative week between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur this saint left his study to stand by his door and catch a breath of air. A cobbler happened to pass in the street. The cobbler called out: "have you anything to mend?" Without thinking Levi Yitzhak answered directly: "no, nothing, thank you." Then his mind took the question in another and more serious vein. In fact, he had things to mend. His soul needed mending. He saw the scuff marks and tears in his soul. He had become impatient with the adulation and devotion of his simple followers. He recognized that he had become comfortable with their approval and had begun to take it for granted. He knew that at times he would give advice without thinking

whether or not that advice fully met the needs of the petitioner.

The point of the story is that Levi Yitzhak was a truly noble soul and it is the noble soul who fully recognizes his sinfulness. One of the paradoxes of our nature is that those who are most careful with their souls and are most concerned with character are those who are most conscious of moral deficiencies. The rude person does not recognize how much he offends those he elbows aside. The vulgarian does not recognize how others cower before his language and avert their eyes from his actions. On the other hand, good folk are conscious of sins of omission as well as sins of commission and of the subtler consequences of their behavior. And so unfortunately, or perhaps fortunately, I don't know, it's a paradox, Yom Kippur is most meaningful to those who have the least need of it.

Those of you who are comfortable tonight had best look to your souls.

White does not suggest purity. What then does it symbolize? Some authorities associate whiteness with the purity of atonement. According to the Torah "on this day shall you be cleansed of all your sins." The prophet Isaiah described the many failings of his contemporaries. He also said to them: "Cease to do evil. Learn to do well. Then though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." The sense of forgiveness, that the slate is wiped clean, is one of the most liberating of all the feelings associated with Yom Kippur.

A dramatic scene took place in the Jerusalem Temple on Yom Kippur. The High Priest made



## YOM KIPPUR

confession for his sins and the sins of the community. He then laid the sins of the people upon the shoulder of a goat called the Azazel, the scapegoat. Attendants would drive the goat outside the temple compound and beyond the city gates. Symbolically, the goat carried off the sins of the community and the community could start the new year with a clean slate.

We associate white and a clean slate. As parents we know that if we constantly remind our children of their failings and mistakes we will destroy the very confidence which they need in order to grow and to mature. If we are unforgiving and burden a man with the sins of his youth we consign him to a life of inadequacy and frustration. If we drag our past with us, ultimately the burden becomes too heavy for us and we are paralyzed. Color forgiveness white.

But Yom Kippur's promise of forgiveness is not quite as pristine as the pure white on our altar suggests. The promise of this day is that if our repentance is honest and we undertake a stricter ethical and spiritual discipline, God will forgive. But if God is forgiving, we are not equally so. There are no guarantees that our neighbors will accept our apologies. Our sages taught that for the slate to be completely clean we must go out and ask forgiveness of every one we have wronged. That task will never be completed. Some we have wronged are no longer among us. Some feel too badly used to even give us an audience. Those who believe that you can make a clean start are innocents. It will take a long while to prove to our neighbors or our family that we are no longer the callow, cruel, arrogant person or the indifferent, careless and selfish person we once were. Once judgments are made they are terribly hard to revise. There is always a tomorrow. There is always opportunity. But in real life the slate is never as clean as we might wish it to be.

What then does the white symbolize? The white stands for a hard and cruel truth. White stands for death. This became clear to me in China of all places. As we drove along I noticed large wreaths of white flowers standing on easels in front of certain stores and apartments. I was told that these were funeral wreaths. In most of Asia and almost all of the Middle East white is the color of death. The *kittel*, the long white robe which was worn in the synagogue on Yom Kippur night, was originally the shroud in which the worshipper would be buried.

We are asked tonight to think of ourselves as among the worshipping dead. According to the *Shulhan Aruch*, the great medieval compendium of Jewish law and practice, the reason the Jew is to wear his *kittel* is to costume him as among the worshipping dead. The point of this exercise is to stimulate each worshipper to consider how his life will seem when he looks back on it. The *Shulhan Aruch* assumes that this exercise will leave us heartbroken.

When Joseph Karo edited the *Shulhan Aruch*, he and all medieval Jews were confident of an afterlife and of a final judgment. They believed that there would be a day of reckoning when each and

every person would have to render account before God for his life and face a judgment as to his fate for eternity. The Jew was to wear white tonight to drive home this warning: "be prepared to meet your Maker." Here was the reminder that though many sins go unnoticed, no one gets away with anything. There is a ledger. It is all written down. Some who are so rich and powerful that no citizen can bring them to account; but there is always someone more powerful than they are. Everyone will stand before God on Judgment Day.

We are no longer medievals. Many of us do not believe in an afterlife; and even if we do we do not take literally the kind of judgment described in this ancient drama. But use your imagination. Religious life requires a rich imagination. Imagine yourselves dead. Think what it will feel like when you look back at your life. Won't you shed a tear for words spoken in anger and hate? Won't you shed a tear for the opportunities to help another which you spurned and for the opportunities to be of service which you turned aside? Won't you shed a tear for all the times that you said: "I'm too busy." "Not now." Won't you shed a tear for the occasions when you turned a cold shoulder to those who needed you? Won't you shed a tear for the life that might have been?

But a tear is not yet a broken heart. I'd like to leave you tonight with a hard thought. As you look back at your life I wonder how much pain you will have, not because of any hurt you willfully inflicted; but because of the pain and the hurt that you caused when you thought you were doing the right. I speak of the evil that good men do.

Love nurtures. Love sustains. Without love the spirit withers, but love can smother. Advice can help our children over many obstacles, but it can also deprive them of the opportunity to make their own mistakes and so deny them the chance to recognize that they have judgment. It may be a good thing to offer your children a job or a share in the business, but are you depriving them of the chance to know the pride of making it on their own? Pain often comes along with the good intentions.

Someone said to me recently: "This has been the kind of year that gives religion a bad name." I agree. A lot of people who thought they were doing the good and who knew that they were right have caused a great deal of pain and harm to others. The Ayatollah Khomeini is a religious man. He is revered as a man of probity and of character by millions of Shiite Muslims. Yet, he organized drum head courts which sent hundreds of people to their death and it was his moral authority which encouraged the year-long captivity of the American hostages. The Muslim religious world is run largely by men known as imams. Many of these religious leaders are men of learning and much respected; yet, many of them arose in their pulpits during the course of the year and preached *jihad*, a holy war, against Israel. Much pain and much harm is precipitated by men and women convinced of the right.

The Pope is a holy man to hundreds and millions of Roman Catholics and to many others; but during the course of this year he censured and censored two of the finest minds among Roman Catholic theologians: Hans Kung and Shillerbeeck. How many men, religious folk, of how many faiths are responsible for continuing the taboos against birth control which consigns hundreds of millions of

earthlings to malnutrition and early death?

On this night of all nights let us not see only the sins of others. We must remind ourselves of the rabbis who lead the Gush Elinum, the block of the faithful, and who are so convinced of the rightness of Greater Israel that no questions of policy or prudence can stop them from establishing settlements on the West Bank or demanding full sovereignty over Jerusalem.

In our own country those who are pro-life are so certain of the morality of their position that they are prepared to ride rough-shod over the freedoms of action of others who are equally sensitive and moral. And what did these good folk achieve this year? Through the Hyde Amendment they managed to deprive the poor of rights the rich enjoy and forced many poor women to bear children for whom they cannot provide. How many unwanted children will be raised in inadequate homes because of their convictions? The evil that good men do.

Tonight of all nights let us be conscious of one fact and humble before it. The Truth is hidden. The Torah says it straight out: "God's ways are not our ways and that God's thoughts are not our thoughts. Just as the heavens are higher than the earth so are His ways higher than our ways and His thoughts than our thoughts." No one, no human, knows The Truth. Yet, millions of human beings are prepared to sacrifice millions of other human beings in order that their religious doctrine or economic ideology or political theory or concept of morality — their truth — be imposed upon the world.

Tonight take to heart the humbling truth that when you think you are most right you may be doing great harm.

Obviously, we cannot live in perpetual doubt. Doubt paralyzes. We must move on. We have convictions. We must act on our convictions. But let us act humbly. Wed your convictions to compassion. Marry your principles to patience. The Talmud contains a delightful aggada. An ascetic scholar by the name of Simeon bar Yohai lived during a time of intense Roman persecution. When the Romans began to imprison Jewish teachers, Simeon bar Yohai hid himself in a cave. He was used to vigils so he survived for a year in hiding. When the evil times abated and Simeon came out of the cave he saw his fellow Judeans buying and selling, arguing and quarreling, living much the way that they had lived before the persecutions. Simeon was one who believed, as the prophets had believed before him, that defeat comes to Israel only when Israel does not live up to the terms of God's covenant; and here the people were living just as before. They had learned nothing. Simeon turned to God and asked God to bring further persecution upon the people until they had accepted correction. What did God do? God sent Simeon back in the cave and told him to stay there until he learned compassion.

Every ideology needs its Gulag Archipelago. Every absolutist doctrine precipitates an Inquisition. Every cell of doctrinaires ultimately organizes on a Crusade. The evil that good men do.

We need a healthy ego. We need to walk out and we need to accomplish. We need to improve the

social order. We need to rectify economic disadvantage. We need to reform many of our institutions; but let's do it humbly. Let us be conscious at all times of the needs and rights of others, and never be so convinced that we are right that we callously manipulate others in order to achieve what we need to achieve or cause unnecessary pain to those who stand in our way. The truth of the matter is that after every revolution there is the need for another revolution. The truth of the matter is that as long as there will be human life on this earth the human being will remain a human being, conflicted, full of contradictions, capable of hurting others. The truth of the matter is that utopia means 'no place.' U-topos. There is no such place.

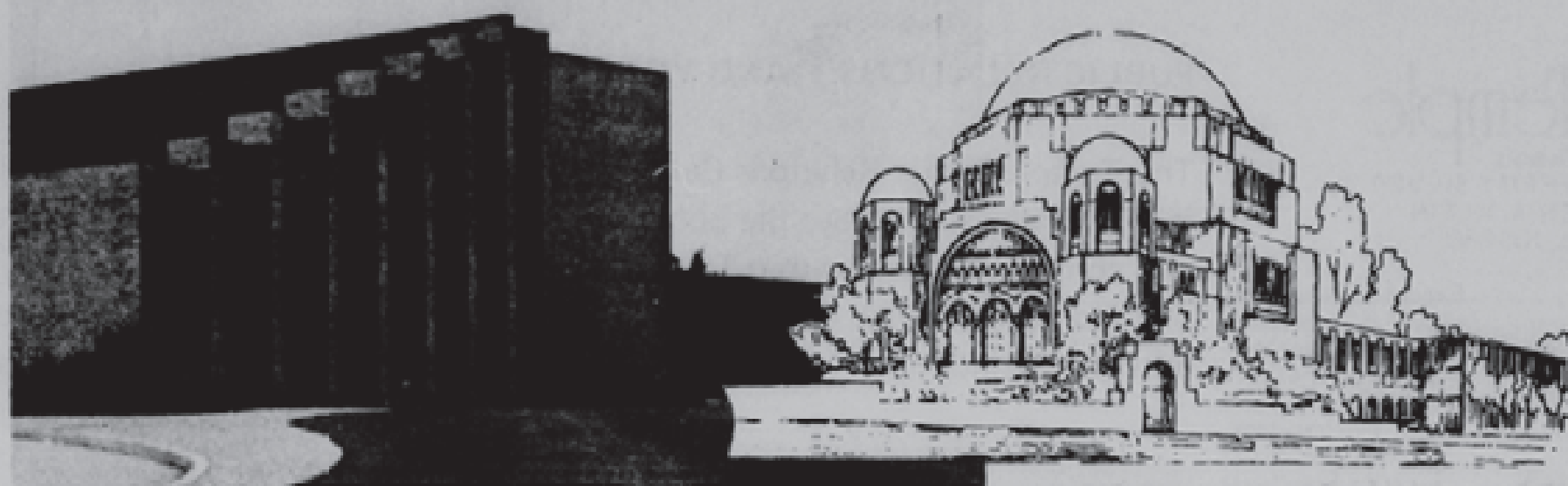
The Torah ceases detailing the history of our people while they are still on the other side of the Jordan. The Israelites have not yet entered the Promised Land. The Torah sets out instructions for a people on the way. The commandments prescribe means rather than ends. The Torah details the commandments necessary to family and community life, it does not provide a blueprint of how the world must be.

Three hundred and sixty-four days of the year believe in yourself and do what you feel is right, but never forget the whiteness of Yom Kippur. You may be wrong, and if you are wrong when you look back on your life won't your heart break at the pain that you caused others out of the best of intentions? So be sensitive. Be compassionate. Be patient. Don't be the purist who insists that there is only one way. Yesterday's reform will plague tomorrow's citizens. Civil liberties can be achieved without quotas. Conservation can be achieved without shutting down the economy. Allow yourself the suspicion of a doubt when you are most convinced that you are right.

God is immortal. Man is mortal. God is infallible. Man is fallible. To be human is not to know. Let your heart break a bit tonight for the certainties of the past and resolve to pursue the good with patience and compassion. I suspect that if we could put the evils that are deliberately caused on one side of a scale and the pain caused by those who were certain they are right on the other side of the scale; we would be surprised by the balance.

We cannot help thinking on Yom Kippur about evil, wickedness and sin. Tonight let us think also about ideology, religion, and commitment. Let us examine our certainties and convictions. The color white says to me: 'you are human. You are fallible. You may be wrong. Be careful.'

*Daniel Jeremy Silver*



November 30, 1980  
Vol. LXVII, No. 7

# The Temple Bulletin

## FROM THE RABBI'S DESK

In recent years there has been a welcome renewal of interest in placing the high moments of life within a religious context. Reporters have talked about a return to ritual, and Fiddler type nostalgia played a role, but the change, I believe, goes deeper. The times are not as prosperous or propitious and we recognize the value of lifting up our roots. More particularly, we have come to understand that we ought not to treat off handedly the fine moments of our lives. They are not that frequent and cannot be taken for granted. Life is full of the unexpected, brief and sometimes bruising. It is satisfying to draw family and friends together for the good times and to savor them to the full and not have everyone drawn together only by illness or a death.

In recent months I have noted an increase in requests for a ceremony involving the naming of a child. Traditionally, of course, a boy is named at his *bris*. The *bris* takes place on the eighth day when the infant is welcomed "into the covenant of Abraham our father" and appropriately blessed and named. Many families continue this practice. We

did with our sons. It can be celebrated quite beautifully and effectively in your home as well as in the hospital. Incidentally, Mount Sinai Hospital makes available its chapel and chapel lounge for babies born there, on the day they are to be taken home.

The child can be named in many ways. There can be a *simcha* at home. A rabbi comes and the blessing is said. Parents and family can come to The Temple for a private moment in our chapel. The naming can be done in more public fashion. Parents and grandparents come to the Sabbath

service at the Branch and a naming prayer is recited during the Torah service. I would have no objection to adding such a moment to our Sunday morning worship.

The ritual is obviously not a lengthy or complicated one. It is the moment that counts, and it can be shaped in a variety of ways to fit the traditions and the feelings of the family.

And so in measure as you are fruitful and multiply we will enjoy such moments together.

*Daniel Jeremy Silver*

## SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES

November 30, 1980  
10:30 a.m.  
The Temple Branch

Rabbi  
DANIEL JEREMY SILVER

will speak on

IS CHANUKAH FOR CHILDREN?

December 7, 1980  
10:30 a.m.  
The Temple Branch

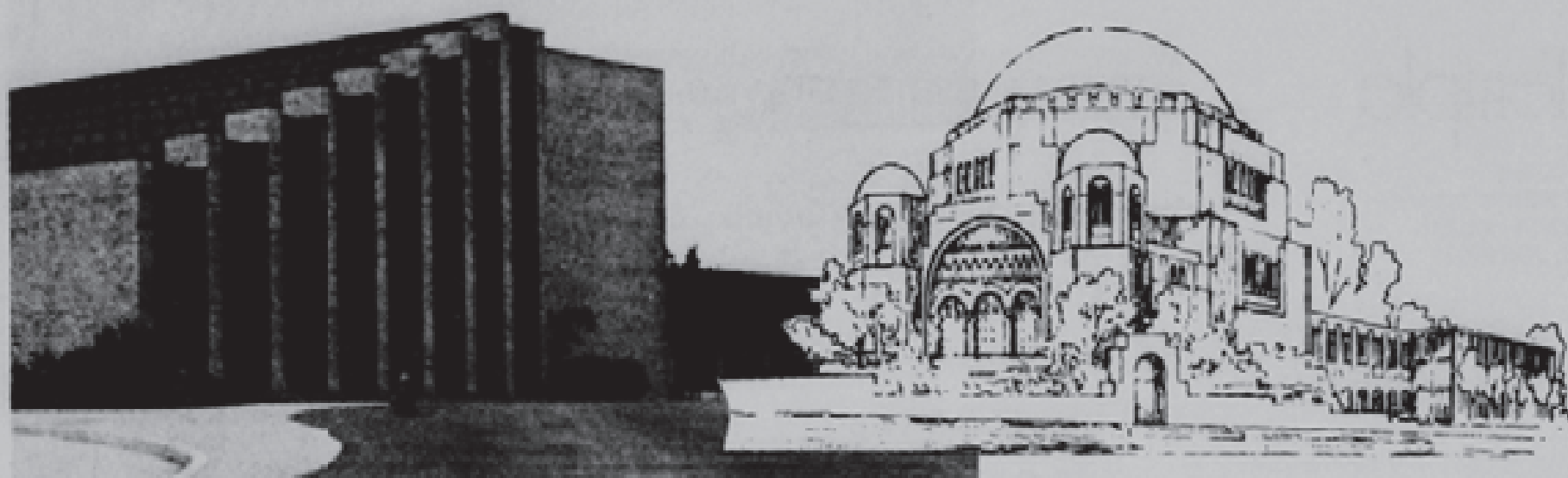
Rabbi  
DANIEL JEREMY SILVER

will speak on

ABORTION: POLITICS AND  
PRINCIPLE

Friday Evening Service — 5:30 to 6:10 — The Temple Chapel  
Sabbath Service — 11:15 a.m. — The Branch





November 2, 1980  
Vol. LXVII, No. 5

# The Temple Bulletin

## FROM THE RABBI'S DESK — FRANCE

Some years ago I had the privilege of lecturing at the liberal synagogue in Paris which is situated on the Rue Copernic, a quiet section near the Arche de Triumph. You hardly notice the building from the street but it is a sizeable structure and for post-war France it has been the center of active non-orthodox Jewish life. This was the synagogue that was bombed in early October.

After an incident of this sort my instincts say, 'leave the investigation to the police.' Unfortunately, there is good evidence that a goodly number of the French police are actively involved in neo-Fascist groups which might well have been responsible for this atrocity.

France's student and labor riots of the late sixties were far more dangerous and violent than ours, and these, together with recurring terrorist activity by groups of Arabs and North African terrorists, have made the Fascist traditions attractive to many in law enforcement. Nazism was not a phenomenon limited to Germany. Millions of Frenchmen followed Laval and applauded the pro-Hitler and Fascist activities of Vichy. Polls taken since the second World War have consistently shown that a fifth or a fourth of the population remains virulently anti-semitic.

I have a feeling that this bombing will mark a turning point in the history of the Jewish community of France. Of nearly 300,000 Jews in France in 1939, only 120,000 survived

the war. Today French Jewry numbers some 600,000. It's a new community. There was a small emigration from Eastern Europe at the end of the war. Then 100,000 Jews came in from Egypt and the Maghreb when Nasser came to power. The remainder have returned from Algeria or emigrated from Morocco or North Africa.

The older community was organized around a Consistoire, a rather lethargic central body which tended to define its interests in the narrowest religious terms. Much like the American Jewish elite before the second World War, the leaders of French Jewry sought to solve their problems by discrete and quiet conferences and always insisted in public that there were no Jewish issues. But with the Gaullist government's consistently pro-Arab policies,

the emergence of left-wing and right-wing anti-semitism and active violence this position has become increasingly ineffective and inappropriate.

There have been stirrings of change over the past decade. There was an active drive to raise money to care for the new immigrants. The religious interests of these immigrants stimulated France's rather moribund orthodoxy. When in 1977 France released Abou Daud, the leader of the Munich massacre, despite a request for his extradition by the Bavarian government and Israel, the community recognized that their government's occasional statements of concern for Israel's survival were hypocritical and that there were Jewish political issues.

(Continued on Page 2)

## SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES

November 2, 1980  
10:30 a.m.  
The Temple Branch

Rabbi  
DANIEL JEREMY SILVER

will speak on

A RABBI LOOKS  
AT THE ELECTION

November 9, 1980  
10:30 a.m.  
The Temple Branch

Rabbi  
DANIEL JEREMY SILVER

will speak on

THE RABBI:  
YESTERDAY & TODAY

Friday Evening Service — 5:30 to 6:10 — The Temple Chapel  
Sabbath Service — 11:15 a.m. — The Branch

# The Temple

Rabbis  
DANIEL JEREMY SILVER  
STEPHEN A. KLEIN  
PAUL JOSEPH

ALVIN CRONIG . . . . . Executive Secretary  
BETH DWOSKIN . . . . . Librarian  
MONA SENKFOR . . . . . Principal  
DAVID GOODING . . . . . Director of Music

CHARLES M. EVANS . . . . . President  
MARILYN M. BEDOL . . . . . Vice President  
BERNARD D. GOODMAN . . . . . Vice President  
HOMER GUREN . . . . . Vice President  
ROBERT GORDON . . . . . Treasurer  
STUART M. NEYE . . . . . Associate Treasurer

LEO S. BAMBERGER . . . . . Exec. Secretary Emeritus  
MIRIAM LEIKIND . . . . . Librarian Emeritus

## COFFEE HOUR HOSTS

Louise and Lewis Sternberg are hosts for the coffee hour preceding the worship service today, November 2. Lewis is a member of The Temple Board and President of The Temple Men's Club.

Alice and Norman Klivans will be hosts for the coffee hour preceding the worship service on November 9. Norman is an honorary member of The Temple Board.

## ALTAR FLOWERS

The flowers which grace The Temple altar are delivered by members of The Temple Women's Association to members who are hospitalized.

Friday, November 7 in memory of Minnie Demsey by her husband Charles and children Leo, Delbert and Joseph Demsey and Ethel Polster; also in memory of Peter Klein by his sons Richard and Jerome; also in memory of Myron E. Wohl by his wife Jessie and children Donald and Ellen Wohl, Ronald and Barbara Wohl and grandchildren; also in memory of Jerome J. Newman by his wife Gertrude and children Jan and Allan and grandchildren; in memory of Jean C. Fishman by her children Shirley G. Fishman and Arthur and Aileen Arnson; also in memory of Evalin Stark by Sol Stark, children and grandchildren; also in memory of beloved granddaughter, Vicki Lynn Guren by Pearl Kaplan. Sunday, November 9 in memory of Evalin Stark by Sol Stark, children and grandchildren. Friday, November 14 in memory of Besty Jo Reich by Barbara and James M. Reich, Carol Reich and Amy and Ira Kaplan.

## MOVIE NIGHT EXTRAVAGANZA!

Sponsored by The Temple Senior Youth Group

Two Movie Classics . .

THE NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD  
THE DAY OF THE JACKAL

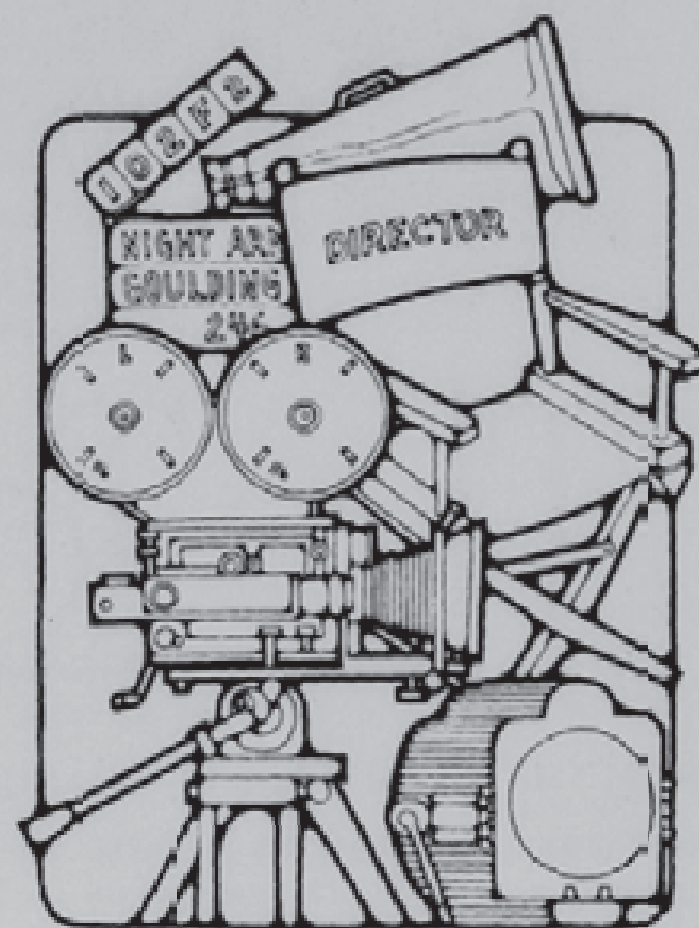
Admission is free!

Friends are welcome!

Popcorn will be served! Candy and pop can be purchased:

FOR ALL 9TH, 10TH, 11TH, AND 12TH GRADERS:

You'll be sorry if you miss this special program!



## NATIONAL FEDERATION OF TEMPLE BROTHERHOODS — JEWISH CHATAUQUA SOCIETY CONVENTION

Cleveland will be host city for the 28th Biennial Convention of the National Federation of Temple Brotherhoods — Jewish Chatauqua Society from November 12 to 16. The Biennial program, through speakers, workshops, and discussion groups, will focus upon issues facing the Jewish community in the decade ahead.

On Saturday, November 15, The Temple will host the Convention at University Circle. A Sabbath morning service will be conducted by Rabbi Klein, followed by a tour of The Temple and the Museum. Luncheon will be followed by a lecture by Rabbi Silver. Lew Sternberg and Robert Sanders are the co-chairpersons for the day.

## THE TEMPLE MEMORIAL BOOK

The Temple maintains a Memorial Book. Inscribed names are read at the Vesper Service which occurs nearest to the Yahrzeit.

Evalin Stark

Inscribed in loving memory by Sol Stark, children and grandchildren.

Albert Siegler

Inscribed by his loving family.

## IN MEMORIAM

The Temple notes with sorrow the death of:

Clifford Blumenstock

Irving Glick

Irving J. Haber

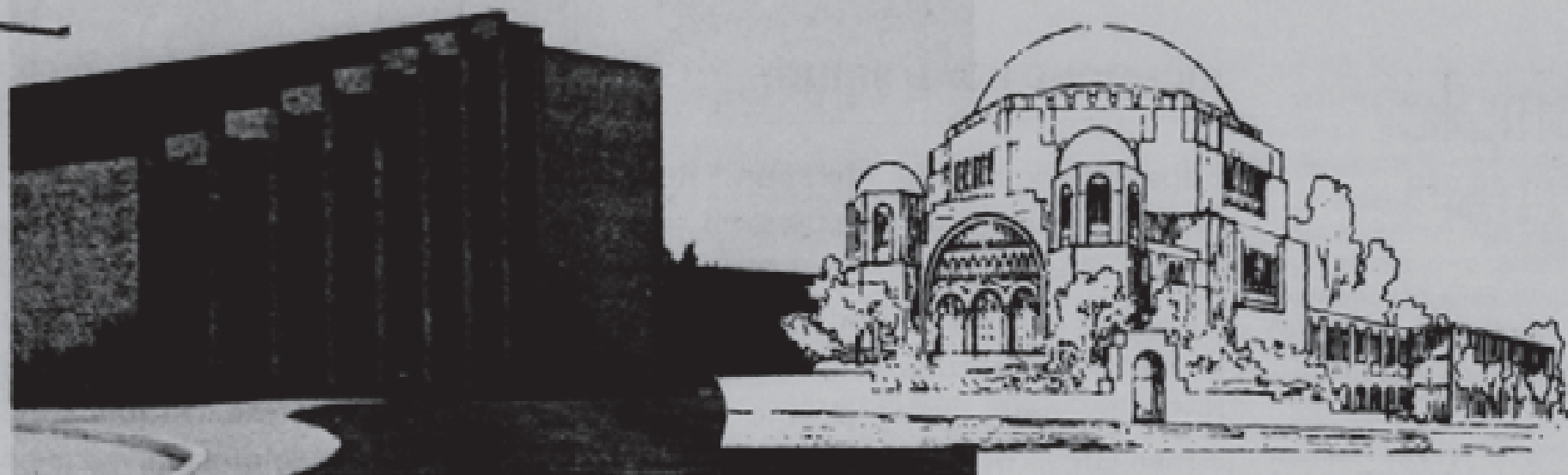
and extends heartfelt sympathy to members of the bereaved families.

## FROM THE RABBI'S DESK (cont)

The bombing of the Rue Copernic synagogue was a national event. Leaders of the government attended the memorial service. Parliament suspended its session during the service. The heads of the left-wing parties marched in a long protest parade. There are new leaders, new concerns and new energies, and I doubt that the old-style leaders will be able to reimpose their policies of patience and inaction. France's old-new Jewish community has come of age. As the Zohar says, "there is no day without its night, there is no night without its day."

*Daniel Jeremy Silver*





December 14, 1980  
Vol. LXVII, No. 8

# The Temple Bulletin

From the Rabbi's Desk: JERUSALEM: CITY OF PEACE, CITY OF CONTROVERSY  
The sermon of November 16, 1980 is produced here in response to numerous requests.

The date was the thirtieth of July of this year. The place was the Knesset in Jerusalem. At issue was a bill which amended the Basic Law of the State of Israel in four ways. It declared that Jerusalem "in its entirety shall be the capital of Israel"; that the President of the State of Israel, the Knesset and the government of Israel and the Supreme Court shall meet in Jerusalem; that Jerusalem's religious shrines shall be protected from desecration and that access shall be guaranteed; and that a special bureau be established to oversee the city's development.

In legislative parlance this law is a declaratory document. A declaratory law makes no actual changes but stipulates a government's position. Jerusalem has been the capital of Israel since 1948. The Knesset meets in Jerusalem. The President, the Prime Minister and the Supreme Court have their offices there. The shrines are protected. Freedom of access is guaranteed. A special department exists to oversee the development of the city.

Since 1948 Jerusalem has been Israel's capital. In June of 1967, shortly after the Six-Day War, the Knesset passed several bills which had the effect of making Jerusalem part of the State of Israel. One bill was passed which declared that the government could, when it wished, extend the jurisdiction and administration of the State to any part of the land of Israel, and that same day all of Jerusalem was brought within this law's provisions. At the same time another law was passed which allowed the Minister of Interior to extend the boundaries of any municipality. A week later the Minister of Interior extended the boundaries of Jerusalem to include East Jerusalem and a good bit of surrounding countryside.

The Knesset's action of July 30 changed nothing. Its only effect was to unleash a diplomatic furor. Egypt cancelled participation in the autonomy talks. The United Nations Security Council passed a resolution, Resolution 468, which declared Israel's

actions null and void, and mandated countries which had embassies in Jerusalem to remove them. Subsequently, eleven of the thirteen countries who maintained embassies in the capital withdrew them. The exceptions were the Dominican Republic and Guatemala. The World Council of Churches condemned Israel for its unilateral action, and the Vatican surfaced a plan which they had floated in the early nineteen-forties which suggested that Jerusalem be internationalized with the Church having a role in the governance of "the Holy City."

The United States' role after June 30 can at best be called enigmatic. At their national convention the Democratic Party had included in their platform a plank which "recognizes and supports the established status of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel" and "as a symbol of statehood urges that the United States Embassy should be moved from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem." Yet, when the Security Council took up the resolution to condemn Israel and man-

date the removal of existing embassies, the representatives of a Democratic Administration abstained, allowing Resolution 468 to become effective. Clearly, the United States government was aware of the equivocal nature of its action. Ambassador McHenry was not allowed to speak that day. The Secretary of State, Mr. Muskie, was brought in, and the speech he made belied the action the U.S. took. He called the resolution "unbalanced and unrealistic." He said that "we reject the resolution as a disruptive attempt to dictate to other nations." Then on the vote he abstained, and once the resolution was on the books the economic power of the Arab world and the interests of the Vatican came into play and the embassies were withdrawn.

In an interview after he announced that Holland was moving her embassy from Jerusalem to Tel Aviv, the Dutch Foreign Minister said openly that Holland had been threatened by the Arab world

(Continued inside)

## SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES

December 14, 1980  
10:30 a.m.  
The Temple Branch

Rabbi  
DANIEL JEREMY SILVER

will speak on

CAN ISRAEL SURVIVE?

December 21, 1980  
10:30 a.m.  
The Temple Branch

Rabbi  
DANIEL JEREMY SILVER

will speak on

RELIGION - WHAT IS IT?

Friday Evening Service - 5:30 to 6:10 - The Temple Chapel  
Sabbath Service - 11:15 a.m. - The Branch

## FROM THE RABBI'S DESK

(Continued)

with the cancellation of eight billion dollars in commercial orders and told that the landing rights of KLM would be reviewed negatively if they failed to act; further, that Holland's locations of oil would be severely restricted. Holland, incidentally, was the only one of the European countries which had an embassy in Jerusalem.

The other countries that withdrew were from Latin and South America, heavily Catholic countries, which were reacting to various interests including those of the papacy. Under John Paul II the policies of the Vatican have taken a new look. Gone are the days of John XXIII. The present Pope has resurrected the family and sexual principles of the Church in their full rigidity. At the same time he has recognized that the future of the Church lies in the Third World, particularly in Latin and South America, rather than in Europe or the United States where the Church is losing adherents, priests and religious to the pluralism of modern life. His policy is to ally the Church as far as possible with the liberation movements of that area, which is to say with the interests of the Third World, and in so doing, insofar as Israel is concerned, the Church increasingly reflects the attitudes of forces which see Israel as an extension of Europe and European imperialism. In particular, John Paul II has resurrected the Church's interest in the internationalization of the Holy City.

After the second World War when the future of Palestine was being debated at the United Nations, as the partition resolution began to develop, the Vatican put great pressure through some largely Catholic countries to achieve an international status for Jerusalem which it calls the Holy City. The Vatican was successful and the resolution of November of 1947, which decreed partition, also declared Jerusalem to be a *corpus separatum* which is legal language for a separate entity. Jerusalem and a spot of land running south and including Bethlehem was declared to be an international area to be administered by the U.N. Trusteeship Council. The Arabs rejected internationalization out of hand and the Trans-Jordanian army attacked the Jewish settlements in and around Jerusalem. Jerusalem's Jews sent telegrams to the United Nations petitioning for protection. They said, in effect, you proclaimed your authority over us, now protect us. Their telegrams were never answered. No United Nations soldier was sent to enforce that United Nations decision.

In effect, the United Nations walked away from Jerusalem and in so doing its 1947 decision ceased to have effect. Two percent of the Jewish population of Jerusalem died during the fighting. Jerusalem became a divided city, divided by the cease-fire lines of the two armies. The Old City was in the Trans-Jordanian hands. The Western city was in Israeli hands.

The proposal to internationalize Jerusalem became a dead letter, but the Vatican has a long memory. Sensing an opportunity to achieve what was not achieved thirty-five years ago, the Vatican in June of this year issued a memorandum reviewing the history of Jerusalem and surfacing again its interest in the Holy City. The argument put forward was that the city is sacred to all faiths and, therefore,

all faiths have a legitimate stake in determining its political future.

Why did Israel pass a law which changed nothing and, predictably stirred up a hornet's nest? The history of this legislation is, as Alice would say, "curiouser and curiouser." In April a private member of the Knesset Geulah Cohen, introduced a bill which declared that Jerusalem shall be the capital of the State of Israel, and defined Jerusalem's boundaries as those which came into being after the 1967 War. Geulah Cohen is Israel's Madame LaFarge, the lady who in Dickens' *Tale of Two Cities* sat each day beside the guillotine knitting while the heads of the royalists were chopped off. Geulah Cohen is a hawk among hawks. Months ago she withdrew from Menachem Begin's Herut party because she claimed that the Prime Minister had criminally given away in the Camp David Accords parts of Eretz Yisrael. Since then she has been a one-woman, radical chauvinist opposition. Her bill was introduced in order to embarrass the government and to prevent it during the autonomy talks from making any agreement which might reduce Israel's claims to full sovereignty over a united Jerusalem.

How did this private bill end up becoming the basic law of the State? The answer is to be found both in Israeli politics and in the international arena. These last months Israel has been subjected to innumerable pressures on the issue of Jerusalem. Here was a way of saying, 'we'll bend so far, but no further.'

In April Egypt's People's National Assembly passed a two-pronged bill. In the first paragraph Jerusalem was declared part of the West Bank. The implication was that Jerusalem should be considered along with the West Bank in the autonomy talks rather than be reserved for later and separate negotiations. Israel agreed at Camp David that West Bank negotiations would involve issues of autonomy and sovereignty. Israel never agreed to raise the issues of autonomy and sovereignty in respect to Jerusalem. Egypt was trying to force Begin's hand or force the United States to force his hand. The second paragraph of this Egyptian resolution declared Jerusalem the capital of any Palestinian sovereignty. Interestingly, and not surprisingly, the world's moral indignation being as selective as it is, when the Egyptians declared Jerusalem an Arab capital there was no protest. When Israel simply restated a long-time political fact, all hell broke loose. Rightly or wrongly, the Israelis saw all this as an attempt to force the re-division of the city.

A few weeks later the Security Council passed another of its innumerable anti-Israel resolutions. In this resolution, Number 466, as so often before, Israel was called upon to withdraw from various territories. The exact language was: "From all occupied Palestine and all Arab territories including Jerusalem." When this particular resolution was voted on, the United States abstained, assuring Israel that the language did not mean that Israel was under the same obligation to withdraw from Jerusalem as from the West Bank, but Israel is no longer reassured by the State Department's readings of U.N. documents and read the resolution as another attempt, and a far-reaching one, to divest it of sovereignty over Jerusalem.

Then the Vatican released its memorandum and resurrected the whole question of a *corpus separatum*. Here the question raised went beyond re-division to the question of the legitimacy of Israel's sovereignty over all parts of the city. What could Israel believe but that a coordinated move was afoot either to divide the city or to deny Israel effective sovereignty within it.

All this happened against the background of mounting United States pressure to begin again the autonomy negotiations. Egypt had withdrawn and the Carter Administration was eager that Israel should make concessions on both outstanding issues, the West Bank and Jerusalem, in order to get Egypt back to the table so that Mr. Carter, in his campaign, could point to an ongoing foreign policy success.

The passage of the Jerusalem bill was Israel's way of saying to the world, 'go to hell, we won't be pushed any further.' It was a satisfying gesture, but gestures can have serious political consequences and, clearly, this one had consequences beyond what the government expected. Geulah Cohen's bill had been amended and watered down before it was passed, but no one noticed.

This chain of events reminds us that most of the West's talk about its concerns for Israel's legitimacy, rights and security is just that, talk, well-intentioned phrases which soothe the conscience but which no one has any intention of acting on. When push comes to shove oil, business and power carry the day. Six years ago in this very room many of you heard soon-to-be president, Gerald Ford, say that the Republican Party was committed to moving the United States embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. When Gerald Ford became president there was, of course, no such move.

If you ask why the American Embassy is in Tel Aviv, the answer is that in 1948 the State Department was worried about the Vatican and the Catholic world and felt it prudent to keep up the fiction behind the *corpus separatum* resolution. If you ask why the move was not made later, the answer was that the State Department did not want to be seen as favoring Israel. No wonder the Israelis are saying, 'we won't be pushed any further. Jerusalem must remain united, our capital.'

For what it's worth I can make an impeccable legal and moral case for a united Jerusalem as Israel's capital. Israel did not conquer Jerusalem. Israel took authority over the western city when the United Nations failed to defend territory over which it asserted sovereignty. Israel did not set out to conquer East Jerusalem. In 1967 Israel sent messages to King Hussein, asking him to stay out of the war. He did not. Nasser was putting out false information about Egyptian victories and Hussein saw an opportunity to take the whole place. During the war the Israelis took most of their casualties while taking the Old City because of a decision not to use heavy armor which might damage the holy places. The city was taken in hand to hand combat and paid for with blood.

(Continued)



## FROM THE RABBI'S DESK

(Continued)

On the question of access and control of the holy places, the issue the Church is raising, only Israel has lived up to public guarantees of the protection of the shrines or made good on the pledge of freedom of access. Between 1948 and 1967 Jews couldn't enter the Old City. The Wall was closed to Jews. There were fifty-eight synagogues in the Old City and everyone was desecrated. The graveyards on the Mount of Olives were desecrated.

When you look back over time you discover that only the Jews have protected the holy places of Jerusalem. When the Temple was destroyed by the Romans they leveled it and built on the Temple Mount a Temple to Jupiter. When the Roman Empire became Christian the emperors leveled the pagan temple and built there a church. When the Arabs conquered Jerusalem they leveled the church and built a mosque. When the Crusaders conquered Jerusalem they leveled the mosque and built a church. When the Arabs reconquered Jerusalem they leveled the church and built the El-Aksa Mosque. When the Jews took Jerusalem they protected the Mosque and the Dome of the Rock and not only guaranteed freedom of access but gave the various religious orders sovereignty of their shrines.

Since the Jebusites only the Jews have ever considered Jerusalem as a capital. Jerusalem was a Jebusite city until David conquered it and made it his own. The Bible calls Jerusalem *Kiryat David*, the city of David. David chose Jerusalem because of its location between the two warring kingdoms of Israel and Judah. From Jerusalem he could and did unify the country. Jerusalem remained for a thousand years the Jewish capital. When the Romans conquered Judea they moved their administration to Caesaria on the coast. When the Arabs conquered the area their capital was the first in Damascus and then in Bagdad, not in Jerusalem. The Byzantines ruled from Constantinople. The Crusaders had a small kingdom in Jerusalem but their real center was in Antioch. The Turks ruled from a provincial center in Beirut. Only the Jews have been interested in Jerusalem as the center of their national life and the focus of their religion. A Muslim in Jerusalem may consider it a holy city, but he prays facing Mecca. A Catholic in Jerusalem may consider it a holy city but the holy city is Rome.

Zionism took its name from Jerusalem, from Mt. Zion, the Temple Mount. The messianic hope was focused here; "next year in Jerusalem".

The legal credentials of the Jews to Jerusalem are impeccable. When Jews have been in control the rights of others have been scrupulously protected. When Arabs controlled the Old City Jews were prohibited from attending its synagogues or visiting the Wall. When Israel controlled Jerusalem the Arabs not only had free access to their holy places but were allowed to retain their Jordanian passports, vote in Jerusalem's municipal elections and sit on the Municipal Council. Israel's electrical, telegraphic, sewage and water services were extended to East Jerusalem, services which the Arabs had not provided. Jews have been careful and helpful, but in the world of diplomacy, in the world

as it is, such a record means little. The issue is not responsibility and sensitivity but power.

If I had been a member of the Knesset, I hope I would have had the wisdom to vote against this bill. It was a gratuitous act and little is gained by such actions, but the world's reaction would have hardened my resolve. Israel cannot depend on promises.

Those who amended Geulah Cohen's original bill did so to make it as vague as possible so as to allow areas for further negotiations. What does Jerusalem "in its entirety" mean? There are many ways for sovereignty to be asserted. Obviously, there will have to be some negotiation, but the world must learn that no government in Israel could survive which would deal away the city or agree to its division, and that the country will go down fighting rather than have Jerusalem torn out of its body politic. This, too, is a fact which diplomats must weigh along with oil and markets.

Jerusalem will remain a bone of contention between Israel and the West as well as between Israel and the Arab world because Israel is not about to give in on this issue. Is there a solution?

You had heard me say many times that not all problems have solutions, and I'm not so sure that the Jerusalem issue permits a full solution. The State Department's position has been that the issues involving Jerusalem ought to be left until all the other arrangements have been signed. Their assumption seems to be that all else being settled, Israel can then be pressured to go the last mile. This attitude suggests that this 'premature' surfacing of the issue may have been to Israel's advantage. It should now be clear to all that there are irreducible conditions on which there can be no give.

What if there is no final accord on Jerusalem? I'm not convinced that the worst thing that could happen to the peace process in the Middle East would be the absence of a final treaty between Egypt and Israel. As long as Egypt and Israel are convinced that their future lies with the West there is the basis for a no war situation. Syria and Jordan cannot make war against Israel on their own. There can be peace without a peace treaty, and peace treaties do not guarantee peace.

I am convinced that our State Department and others would be well-advised to take the issue of Jerusalem off the list of items which must be resolved; It's a time to "sit and do nothing", as the sages used to say. The Middle East is changing. Who would have believed six months ago that Iraq and Iran would be at war or that Syria and Iraq and Syria and Jordan would be mobilized on each other's borders? The fact is that the Arab world is too unstable to permit lasting agreements since the real issues in the Arab world are not the issues between themselves and Israel but the conflicts between poverty and wealth, between the oil-less and the oil-rich, between radical revolution and feudalism, between an Islam which is totally medieval and a more secularized Islam. As long as these issues remain unresolved no Israel-Arab settlement will be lasting.

If we face the question of Jerusalem directly there are few meaningful options. Israel will not give. The other countries cannot take. If we allow time to pass much will change. Open borders will change the nature of the relationship between Israel and Egypt. Another Pope and other policies may rule in St. Peter's. A new balance of power may come into being in that part of the world.

I'm not convinced that Sadat cares that much about Jerusalem. He cares about Jerusalem because the Saudis care and engender his popularity by claiming, he's not enough of a Muslim. Economic survival and Libya, not Jerusalem are Sadat's primary concerns, these and the continuing support of the United States.

I'm not convinced that Syria cares that much about Jerusalem. Syria cares about the Golan, that's another story, but Jerusalem is not her primary concern. I'm not sure that Hussein believes any longer that he can recapture the West Bank, much less Jerusalem. His problem has been reduced to staying alive.

It's not clear what kind of autonomy will develop in the West Bank and what kind of relationship that community will have with Israel; but it is clear that whatever entity comes into being in the West Bank, it will be dependent upon Israel for employment, transportation and access to the sea. Arrangements on that level must involve give and take, a *quid pro quo*. Such negotiations have not begun, but when they do they certainly will create opportunities for bargaining over the future state of the Arabs in Jerusalem.

Physically, Jerusalem cannot be redivided unless you blast away half the city and forcibly remove much of the population. In the last fifteen years a new city has spread in a crescent shape around older settlements. In Jerusalem there are three Jews for every Arab. Jerusalem's economy and its institutions are tied to Israel. New facts have come into being which did not exist in 1967 and the Arabs know this as well as the Israelis. Some months ago there was a great battle between the PLO and the citizens of East Jerusalem. The PLO insisted that the Arabs of East Jerusalem disengage their homes from Israeli utilities and services. The citizens of East Jerusalem insisted that they could not do without the Israeli telephone, and electrical systems and that they would not give up these utilities; and they did not give them up. What I am saying is that over time a *modus vivendi* will come into being which may allow for some measure of peace, but until then, on a political level, the argument over sovereignty cannot be resolved.

Jerusalem cries out for patience.

*Daniel Jeremy Silver*



December 20, 1981  
Vol. LXVII, No. 8

# The Temple Bulletin

## From the Rabbi's Desk: THE JEWS OF CLEVELAND — A NEW LOOK

The sermon of November 22, 1981 is produced here in response to numerous requests.

In European synagogues when it came time to count for a minyan the shamas would say: 'not one, not two, not three.' Deep in our psyches there is a primitive fear of being numbered or singled out. In those days even if the purpose were a religious one, the person singled out feared that the evil spirits would notice.

Historically, individuals have always resisted census taking and governments have always sought census figures. The term census is of Latin origin. It derives from a Roman practice. Rome was famous for her centralized administration, of registering adult males and personal property for purposes of taxation, military conscription, and the determination of the individual's political status. The government gained by knowing. The individual gained by the government's not knowing.

Interestingly, the Bible tends to take the side of the individual against central planning because census taking was so often an instrument for the extension of royal authority and tyranny. We know David as the young hero who slew Goliath; as the military leader who was also a sensitive poet, as the man who made Jerusalem Israel's capital. It's well to remember that David was also an ambitious and calculating king, the first man to establish effective authority over the tribes. He did so by conquering Jerusalem, making it his own city, using its tolls to pay his private mercenary army and by planning for Jerusalem not only the royal palace but a royal shrine which would become a national sanctuary. Towards the end of his life, in order to further enhance his ability to govern, David ordered a census of the tribes. The census was carried out despite some conservative opposition led by one of his generals, Joab. The king had the final say. The census took nine months to complete and, unexpectedly, almost immediately after its completion a terrible plague devastated the community. Many came to believe that the plague had been sent by God as punishment for David's actions. The story of the census and the plague is told twice in Scripture. In both places it is clear that "God was displeased with this thing." In the second and later version, the priestly

version in the Book of Chronicles. It is even suggested that Satan led David to it.

The taking of a survey or of a census is never a neutral act. I'm always amazed at the willingness of people to offer up private information to anyone who asks. You'll tell them what they should sell you. You'll tell a candidate what he should tell you. Those who pay for a survey are always interested in knowing something about you for their benefit.

Now, obviously, there are surveys and surveys. In a highly intricate and complex society such as our own, we need a measure of central planning in order to allow us to move ahead; but I confess that my preference is always for less rather than for more. It's only in that way that some measure of personal freedom can be maintained.

Last year the Jewish Community Federation undertook a census — survey of our Cleveland Jewish community. Its purposes were to help plan for the needs of the community during the decade of the 80's; and because we generally approve of the purposes and services of the Federa-

tion this document was one with which we willingly cooperated; and I am grateful to those who prepared the figures for releasing to me a number of their preliminary findings before they were published in complete form. I asked for these figures because I believe it important that men and women who have the best interests of this community at heart confront these figures, consider their implications and bring to bear on them their best understanding of the implications of these findings for our future. I think it important that these issues be fully aired and widely discussed so that we develop some broad agreement as to what needs to be done and these vital decisions are not left to any small group of leaders.

The most important figure which emerges from this survey is the bottom line. According to these figures there were 70,095 Jews in the Cleveland area a year ago. The document includes a chart which indicates that there were 83,500 Jews in the same area in 1970. There has been a drop then of some 13,500 people in the last decade, a drop of about 17 percent, and this drop has not been

(Continued inside)

### SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES

December 20, 1981  
10:30 a.m.  
The Temple Branch

Rabbi  
DANIEL JEREMY SILVER

will speak on

IS CHANUKAH FOR CHILDREN?

December 27, 1981  
10:30 a.m.  
The Temple Branch

Rabbi  
DANIEL JEREMY SILVER

will speak on

RACE

Friday Evening Service — 5:30 - 6:10 p.m. — The Temple Chapel  
Sabbath Service — 11:15 a.m. — The Branch



## FROM THE RABBI'S DESK

(Continued)

to parents as they struggle to find their way in a convulsed society.

I was struck by another set of figures though my conclusion here cannot be fully substantiated from the charts which are in hand. One chart listed employment by categories and by age groups, and what struck me was what seemed to be a marked change in the younger groups from entrepreneurial employment to salaried employment. I am convinced that the salaries earned by many in the professional classes of our community are quite substantial, probably higher proportionately than they were ten or twenty years ago. But I suspect that whatever the level of salary for most people, it's never enough to meet their day to day level of expenditures and expectations. Against this place the fact that in most of our fund drives 80 to 85% of the monies raised come from 10% of the givers and probably 50 to 60% of the drive is raised from a handful or a dozen top givers. This community has depended upon the generosity of those few individuals and families who could give a quarter of million, a half a million, or a million dollars a year to a variety of drives. Now, unless some of these high salaried people gamble prosperously on the stock market, it's unlikely that they will ever build up the capital required for this kind of giving. I suspect that given the decline in the actual numbers in our community, and given the changing employment picture, it will be harder in 1990 than it is today to raise the front end money which is so critical to the success of any drive. If I am correct, we will face a situation where, because of inflation and implosion, this community will not be able to afford all that it has until now been able to afford. Competition for the dollar will become fiercer and there will be a continuing struggle to maintain present levels of service. At the very least, we cannot continue to move our institutions with every population shift. It's too costly and we need to pay for services, not mortgages. Already today there is hardly an institution where the gap between the total cost of operation and monies which come from dues or billings has not widened. Between brick and services I come down for services, and I sense the need to find new and more imaginative ways to deliver these services.

This brings me to an agenda which has occupied my concern for a number of years. I am firmly convinced that we have reached a point where we need to find new ways to go about planning for the years ahead — ways which will allow us to break out of narrow institutional molds.

It's well to review in this connection the history of our Jewish Community Federation. The Federation began at the turn of the century out of a felt need to finance the existing social agencies out of a single drive. The same group of citizens were providing most of the monies and they were tired of going around every month with another set of pledge cards. Centralized fund raising led to a degree of centralized planning. As professionalism came into the social service field a degree of professionalism was introduced into the operation of the individual agencies through the efforts of the central planning agency. In the late 1930's again there was a new funding need. Monies were needed for overseas relief by the United Palestine Appeal and the Joint Distribution Committee. This

led to the involvement of the already existing funding agency in those international drives and inevitably to its concern in the way in which those funds were distributed. The Federation, over time, took on a spokesman role in a number of overseas areas. Out of this history a Community Federation developed which concerns itself with all of the international concerns of the Jewish people and with those local service agencies which for historic reasons are affiliated with it. It is not yet a fully developed Jewish Community Federation. A whole host of other institutions which operate in the community, primarily the synagogue, are not directly affiliated and so not directly involved in the planning functions. Here a figure from the survey should be born in mind. Over 61% of all families in our community are affiliated with congregations. Cleveland has perhaps the highest level of congregational affiliation in the country. One out of three of the respondents in the survey indicated that outside of the synagogue they had no affiliation with any Jewish activity or group. Synagogues are where most Jews are. Synagogues not only do most of the educating of the young, nearly 30% of the enrolled students are in congregational schools; but they provide most of the youth activities, support groups for singles and single-parent families, adult education and Golden Age services. The synagogue communities and their services must be brought into the planning process — a process which does not involve them directly will necessarily understate the possibilities our community offers.

The golden age of campaign dollars is behind us. Inflation is on us. We are at a time when hard questions must be asked.

It is my understanding that the Jewish Community Center plans a 10 to 12 million dollar drive to build a branch facility and to refurbish its present facility. Given the amount of available space in our community which was built for 90,000 and will soon number 60,000, one must question the building of another parish building. Could not the services that the Center renders be distributed in the buildings which already dot the community? There is certainly space in that vast reserve of classrooms for all kinds of group activity. All the congregations have auditoriums we have three of them — where theater and lectures could be held and walls on which pictures can be hung. There is a question whether the community ought to be paying for sports facilities when our public bodies, the schools and private groups provide these. It would be a step forward if the serving professional of the community could be placed in centers where most of the Jews in fact are. I could imagine a Center which takes on a new form, based on the Camp Conference Center, run for the benefit of the whole community while directing and sharing a number of activities with other institutions in the community.

I am told that Agnon School is discussing a drive to raise 2 million dollars or more for an expansion of its facilities. I understand they are even talking of a campus which would grow into a Jewish Hawken or University School. Given the declining numbers of young people and the high cost of private school education, hard questions can and must be asked about this kind of expenditure both in terms of capital funds required and in terms of the ongoing cost of such a facility to the community. Already two-thirds of the monies spent from the

Federation campaign for education go to subvent the 10% of our students who are in day schools.

I do not exempt congregations from the need to plan together. Those who would build new classrooms at this time are building for a need which does not exist. Smaller community need not be a lesser community if the change brings us closer together. If all of us are wise and learned and generous and good we can become a community whose influence will be felt not only through our lives but throughout the Jewish world. What is needed is a new understanding of tomorrow and involvement of all parts of the community in the planning process. Buildings and professional services need to be brought together in new ways.

A smaller community is not necessarily a lesser community if that smaller community takes itself in hand now and breaks through the institutional concrete which has marked our thinking in the recent past and begins to follow the path of institutional creativity. I carry in mind the history of the Jewish communities of the small towns in Ohio. Most of them were settled in the mid-nineteenth century by Jews of various backgrounds. Each tended to develop an orthodox shul, a conservative synagogue, and a reform temple, each of which jealously guarded its prerogatives. None, of course, had enough money to support a rabbi, but it was more important to maintain differences and distance than to combine. Then as people faced the day to day problems of life — their children needed Jewish companions, their schools needed Hebrew teachers — some of the distance began to break down, but it didn't break down sufficiently for the institutional concrete to shatter until economics forced the issue and enough died so that there wasn't a minyan. Then, suddenly, everyone discovered that they could work together. Ultimately, there was one synagogue and for awhile these towns were able to hire a rabbi. But, generally, it was too late. Too much had happened. Too many had left. I don't want that to happen to Cleveland.

The congregational community has coalesced into a Congregational Plenum and is engaged in preparing a survey of space and human resources which might be available to the community. The Federation community prepared the survey from which I have drawn and is embarked on a similar process of planning and thought. Shouldn't it be possible for everyone to come together and sit down and work out ways which will benefit all of us? Surely, there's no need to be so jealous of prerogatives that we are blind to the needs of the whole. I believe it can be done. I know it will happen because economics and social conditions will ultimately dictate this course. But I'd like for these changes to come beforehand and be enhancing changes rather than desperate moves taken after we're caught in a vice when it may be too late to accomplish the good that we should and can accomplish.

I hope that we'll have the vision to achieve such a goal.

*Daniel Jeremy Silver*



January 3, 1982  
Vol. LXVII No. 9

# The Temple Bulletin

## From the Rabbi's Desk: EGYPT AFTER SADAT

The sermon of November 15, 1981 is produced here in response to numerous requests.

Among the interesting questions which face any historian is how much weight to give the actions and the policies of any individual leader. Does any man truly affect the course of history? When Anwar Sadat made his bold visit to Jerusalem he seemed to prove the popular idea that the actions of an individual can and do have great and grave consequences - that he had in fact changed the course of history. He had broken the wall of silence and non-recognition which had been erected by the Arab states. He had spoken to the Knesset. He had begun negotiations. Presumably, the path of peace was opened and he had opened it. The question before us is whether this is a proper evaluation of what happened. Was going to Jerusalem an idiosyncratic act by a man of great courage which profoundly changed the course of history or an act of a careful and shrewd political figure who was responding to the perceived needs of his nation? In the later case another leader might not have gone to Jerusalem but he would have worked to the same end in his own way. If Sadat's actions were, in fact, idiosyncratic, then their consequences will probably die with 'him,' but if his actions corresponded to Egypt's needs their daring should not blind us to the probability that his successor will follow along.

It's always been my contention that Sadat acted in order to achieve what I would call the peace dividend rather than peace itself, that he was acting as a national leader; consequently, that the same concerns, though in a way appropriate to changed circumstances, will be reflected in the actions of his successor.

It's interesting in this regard that when we examine the Biblical tradition we discover that it discourages us from ascribing too much significance to the acts of individuals. "Put not your trust in princes". "Let not the wealthy man rejoice in his wealth. Let not the wise man rejoice in his wisdom.

Let not the strong man rejoice in his strength, Let him who would rejoice in this that he knows and understands Me." The Biblical tradition insists on the point that the acts of individuals do not determine the management of history. It is God who determines the course of events - God and not man.

If we look at the most recent and widely popular theory of history, the Marxist one, we again discover a determination to declare the action of men as of little consequence. No man can stay the unfolding of the mass society and the emergence of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Some acts can hasten or delay the inevitable but the dialectic of history will unfold. Marxist historians believe that the policies of individuals are reflexes of the economic interests of their class and so fit in neatly with the dialectic which they posit.

When we look into our own souls we find that most of us take a somewhat different view and

assume that individual acts can effect unexpected change. We believe in the power of individuals over events; but we're not sure how much power they actually have. Whenever men or women offer themselves for election, they tell us they seek office in order to put into effect some programs on whose value we presumably agree. The very fact that they come before us and ask for our votes suggests that if they get too far out of phase with us, with our interests, we will not vote for them the next time. Moreover, it's been shown again and again that if the entrenched administrators in the government are unsympathetic to a particular program, no leader, whatever his power, can really make it work.

In our very complex and integrated society it is simply not true that any one man, however powerful, can markedly change the course of history - unless, of course, he pushes the little red button.

(Continued inside)

## SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES

January 3, 1982

10:30 a.m.

The Temple Branch

Rabbi

DANIEL JEREMY SILVER

will speak on

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

January 10, 1982

10:30 a.m.

The Temple Branch

Rabbi

DANIEL JEREMY SILVER

will speak on

THE JEWISH YEAR IN REVIEW

Friday Evening Service - 5:30 - 6:10 p.m. - The Temple Chapel

Sabbath Service - 11:15 a.m. - The Branch



## FROM THE RABBI'S DESK (Continued)

Of course, if we were all wise, all humble, all unselfish, and all committed to all the good values we could achieve a gracious and stable peaceful society. But we are not and never will be; and one man can not do it for us.

I am not a determinist. I believe that in small ways individuals can affect history. I believe that class and economic realities are not the only realities which must be considered by historians. But I also believe that we in the West tend to ascribe too much consequence to individual acts and not to consider seriously enough the causes and motivation for the act which was taken. When we do we often discover - as I believe was true in Sadat's case - that what seems to be an act of great courage is that, but that its impact depends largely on its ability to catalyze a whole series of events which are in line with pressures and interests which have been roiling just below the surface. Sadat in this case simply hastened what would probably have happened anyway. He uncorked the bottle. He opened for his people a way to effectively express their perceived needs.

Anwar Sadat won the Nobel Prize for Peace. He is considered throughout the West and in large segments of the Jewish community to be a martyr to the cause of peace. I mean in no way to derogate his courage or his flair for the dramatic when I suggest that Sadat was not a crusader for peace but a convinced Egyptian patriot who set out on the "peace" road because of the dividends it promised his people.

Consequently, I find myself ill-at-ease with the lamentations of many in our community over the assassination. I was told that during Yom Kippur services a lady complained throughout my sermon that I was dealing with the Yom Kippur theme rather than giving a eulogy for Sadat. In a number of congregations Sadat's name was included in the Kaddish list. In some religious schools children were encouraged to write short epitaphs praising Sadat's quality. Need I remind you that just eight years ago Anwar Sadat launched a war to destroy the State of Israel and that there are hundreds of homes in Israel which house those who were widowed and orphaned by that war. Sadat was a soldier, not a saint. Sadat was not a Ghandi but a Bismark - a complex political figure whose understanding of Egypt's national interests at one point in time led him to appreciate the value of negotiations and whose flair for the dramatic act enabled him to achieve these negotiations. His policies happened to coincide with some desperate hopes held by many who began to see him as something far more than he was or, I suspect, what he began to imagine himself to be. Sadat was not a visionary but an able and imaginative politician who was able, because of his mastery of the moment, to put Israel into a position where Begin had to agree to more concessions than he probably would have agreed to if the negotiations

had been approached in a more conventional manner.

How did Sadat come to the cause of peace? By losing Egypt's fourth war against Israel. Despite a lightning surprise attack and despite inflicting heavy casualties, Sadat in 1973 was not able to defeat Israel. At the war's close Israel again occupied the East Bank of the Suez Canal and all of the Sinai. Shortly after that war Sadat threw the Russians out of Egypt despite the fact that they were supplying his army and training his officers in the use of sophisticated equipment. He did so because Soviet personnel were also subverting the interest of the mercantile middle class whom Sadat represented and scheming with Egypt's masses and radicals for a revolution. Sadat feared another Nasserite bid for power. Having thrown out the Russians, Sadat found himself with an obsolescent military machine, a partially trained officer corps and a bankrupt economy. His Egypt needed a fresh infusion of capital and since the Eastern Bloc sources were closed to him the only place he could turn was to the West. Moreover, Sadat had a new enemy on his Western front - the Libyan strongman, Khadafy - who seemed to be developing a plan to surround Egypt and its satellite, the Sudan, by moving into Uganda and Chad and mobilizing the radical forces in Eritrea and Ethiopia.

These realities led Sadat and his party to recognize that they needed to find a way to make Egypt attractive to Western investment and to develop in Western governments, particularly in the United States, a new source of cheap and large scale rearmament. The only way to gain these ends led through Jerusalem.

An arrangement with Israel would encourage Egypt to Washington and it had the practical advantage of allowing Egypt to move its forces from East to West. So Jerusalem, and a year and a half later, Camp David. It was a policy that succeeded admirably. The Israelis had what they had always said they wanted - an Arab state that would negotiate with them, and Begin found himself boxed into a position in which he had few options but to give back all of the Sinai in return for uncertain future promises. Egypt's benefits were much more tangible. Egypt gained the tolls of the Suez Canal, the land mass and natural resources of the Sinai, oil, and the gratitude of the military-industrial establishments of Europe and America. Here was a consumation the West had devotedly hoped for. Investments began to pour into Egypt. New plants were established. The United States took up where Russia had left off. In 1976 Egypt received less than 300 million dollars a year in aid from the United States. Last year she received over 2½ billion dollars in military aid alone. The peace dividend was and is real, and insofar as the peace dividend has not yet fully been realized - there is still the third and final removal of Israeli forces from the Sinai scheduled for April of next year - you can be sure Hosni Mubarak will continue the so-called peace policies of his predecessor. Mubarak represents the same

groups within the Egyptian political scheme as Sadat.

In this sense Egypt after Sadat is exactly as Egypt was under Sadat. The only "peace" change which will take place, and it would have taken place if Sadat had continued in power, is that having regained the Sinai, Egypt will turn to other programs of more immediate national benefit. Israel's further concerns - the West Bank, East Jerusalem, open borders - are not Egyptian issues. Come April Egypt will move toward policies which promise further national dividends and those include regaining markets and political ties with the rest of the Arab world. The only "peace dividend" which will stand to Israel's benefit is the continuing Libyan threat. It's a real threat. We have in Egypt 8,000 American men and military on maneuvers in the western desert at this moment because of that threat. As long as it exists, I think Israel can be fairly confident that the Egyptians will not contemplate military actions on the Eastern front and so risk the danger of man on two fronts.

Anyone in the seat of power in Cairo, once April has come and gone and the final Sinai withdrawal has been completed, would begin to move away from the issues which led to Camp David and try and put Egypt back into step with the more "moderate" Arab states. Sadat would have done the same. Egypt's need is to bring Arab banking, commerce and investment into its stumbling economy and to find Arab markets for its exports. Egypt needs and wants to rebuild its military and the way here is through Washington and Riyadh. Egypt's major concern will no longer be her relationship with Begin and Israel - these dividends will have been harvested, so it's likely that those parts of the Camp David agreement which require Egypt to adopt an open-door to Israeli travel and goods will not be implemented - certainly not generously. Egypt has little to gain by doing so. Egypt knows that no Western country will be exercised if she drags her feet on these issues; and that Israel's West Bank problem will provide all the excuse necessary for Europe's lack of reaction.

Egypt after Sadat will be much like Egypt with Sadat. Egypt is a Muslim but not an Arab country, proud of its past and, educationally and culturally more advanced than any other nation in the Middle East except Israel. She is a poor country despite her ability to export 400,000 to 600,000 barrels of oil a day and the tolls of the Suez Canal. Egypt is a country the size of Texas and New Mexico but an importer of food stuffs because only about 6% of the land is arable. Egypt is a country of 41 million, growing at the rate of 1 million a year. Her problems are economic and basic.

Egypt has the largest number of college graduates in the Middle East, about 16% of college-age youth are enrolled; but Egypt cannot provide employment for those graduates, and 2½ million Egyptians

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## FROM THE RABBI'S DESK

(Continued)

work elsewhere, mostly in the Arab world. The remittance of their wages is a major source of revenue. In Egypt inflation is running between 25% and 30% a year, and the distance between the haves and the have-nots has been widening each year. Sadat's major failure was that he did little to improve the lot of the have-nots. Sadat represented the interests of the educated upper classes and the world should not have been surprised, but was; that there was little display of public grief after the assassination. When Nasser died Egyptians poured out into the streets and remained in the streets for the forty days of mourning. When Sadat died they went on to their dinner parties. Leaders have to serve their people's immediate needs.

A poignant cartoon appeared recently in the Jerusalem Post which showed a man, an Israeli, sitting in front of a television set. The announcer is saying, "80,000 people have come to Anwar Sadat's Square to praise Egypt's fallen leader." In the next block you see the viewer talking to himself: "I knew the Egyptians wouldn't remain silent forever." In the next block the television picks up again: "The event was organized in Tel Aviv by Avi Natan." The Egyptians knew Sadat as an elitist who had not done much to help them with their immediate problems.

Sadat's attitude was not unlike Mr. Reagan's, a studied commitment to the disproved theory of trickle-down economics. Trickle-down economics is in bad repute in the United States, and it should be; and it's in bad repute in Egypt, and it should be. Not enough trickles down from the hands of the greedy. Sadat had a palatial home in his native village where his father had been a sizeable landlord and another in Cairo which has some of the world's worst slums. He failed to help the poor, the uneducated and underemployed classes of Egypt who in fascination turned more and more to radical economic or radical Islamic ideologies.

Sadat was a modernist. He used to mock the women in their veils. He called them "walking tents." But many Egyptians mocked Jehan Sadat, his wife, who seems so attractive to us in the West. She's a graduate of the University with a master's degree in library sciences. She is dressed well by British and French couturiers. She talks easily and gracefully. But to many of the men in the Arab world Jehan represents the greatest threat

possible - the end of male supremacy, the violation of God-ordained, Koran-mandated maleness of their world. Sadat was not able to raise the standard of living of the bottom two-thirds of his country, and among those people there was understandable anger and frustration and it was to those people that the more radical ideologies appealed and continued to appeal: Nasserism, Communism, the Muslim Brotherhoods who are committed to eliminate any and all adjustments between Islam and western ideas. Sadat was a devout Muslim but he did not maintain a medieval way of life and ultimately died at the hands of those determined to reimpose the medieval way upon the whole society.

Mubarak will seek to build on the benefits Sadat aimed, and if he is wise he will work to raise the standard of living of his countrymen and to share wealth somewhat more equitably. To a certain degree he will have to achieve this against the entrenched desires of the class which he supposedly represents. Perhaps his best option is to attract investment from the oil-rich countries who have every reason to want to see a strong Egypt aligned with their own purposes. Only through such investment can he create jobs and maintain the food subsidies. If I were Menachem Begin I would not expect a great deal from Hosni Mubarak, but then in 1982 I would not have expected a great deal from Anwar Sadat. The best Israel can hope is that Egypt will become coldly, but non-belligerently, distant. At this moment Egypt has little reason to seek a military confrontation with Israel, but, equally, Egypt has little reason to open up her borders to Israeli goods or align the two countries' pro-Western defense policies. In a sense those who say that there must be a larger context than Camp David for peace in the Middle East are correct. They are saying it for the wrong reasons and offer unacceptable arrangements but they are nevertheless correct. If Israel is to have any kind of security Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and the other confrontation states must somehow be brought into the "peace" process. Unfortunately Mr. Begin has few chips left. He gave a great deal to Sadat, more, I believe, than he should have. All he can really manage now is to delay Israel's removal from the rest of Sinai until he has found a way to tie that removal with some West Bank arrangement in which local Palestinians and Jordanians achieve and accept some version of autonomy. Once Sinai is again theirs, Egypt will wash her hands of the so-called autonomy issue. Sadat and Mubarak have long made it clear that the West Bank must have autonomy, that Jerusalem

must be the capital of an Arab community, and that we (Egypt) will begin the process, but that the Palestinians must work out their own purposes.' Egypt wants to distance itself from this thorny and difficult issue. They have nothing to gain from being involved. Israel doesn't have that luxury, so the necessity of keeping Egypt concerned with the process.

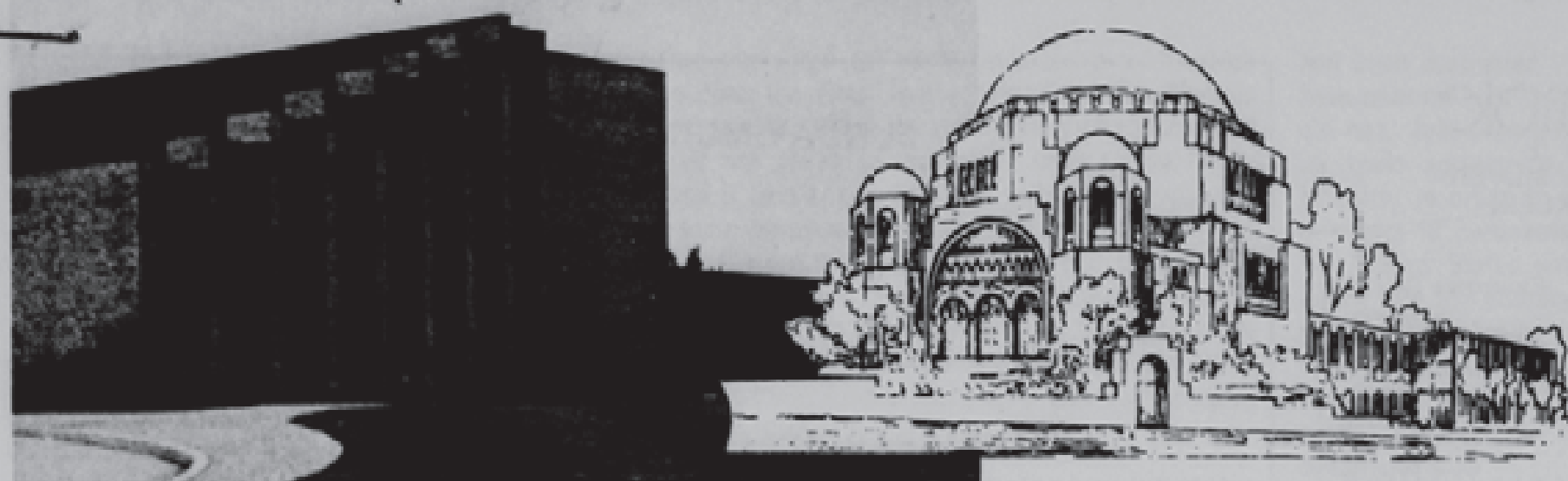
In the long run the radicalization of Egypt due to its economic instability would pose great danger for Israel. The real question in the Middle East is whether Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states can remain as they are, so-called moderate states, that is, nations run by people who represent the inverting classes, or whether they will ultimately become radicalized and represent the passion of the poor who form the majority of their population in which case they will align themselves with the Eastern Bloc and it will be difficult, indeed, for Israel to end its present isolation.

As far as Israel is concerned, Egypt after Sadat is no better or no worse than Egypt with Sadat. There is one small benefit. Expectations have been lowered. There is no longer a saint on the scene, and no one sees Begin and Mubarak embracing and suddenly making everything right. The future is full of danger, compounded by the fact that most of the governments of the West are becoming impatient. In their eyes Israel has become the problem. Everyone accords Israel the right to survive - words; but everybody wants oil and markets and nobody wants to be bogged down in the niceties of Israel's security problems.

One of the most fascinating and frightening moments of the last weeks involved King Hussein's visit to the State Department. He was to hold a press conference and some American official put a map on the wall of the room where he was to speak which listed every state in the Middle East except Israel. When this was noticed by a reporter, the press attache played dumb. He didn't know where it had come from. I know where it had come from and so do you. It had come out of the sensitivity of some State Department office to King Hussein's unwillingness to recognize the State of Israel. If our State Department is so concerned with the sensitivities of a small Arab kinglet, imagine the degree of concern being directed in the same quarters to Israel's survival problems. What kind of real understanding can Israel expect?

*Daniel Jeremy Silver*





March 22, 1981  
Vol. LXVII, No. 15

# The Temple Bulletin

## FROM THE RABBI'S DESK: WHAT'S LEFT OF ANTI-SEMITISM?

Many have asked for copies of the talk by Rabbi Daniel Silver which concluded the American Jewish Committee-Temple Symposium on "What is Right? What is Left?" We are pleased to include it in this Bulletin.

Let me begin with a confession. I am not an anti-semitologist, a word I recently coined to describe a professional in the area of anti-semitism. The other day I looked at the index of the more than seven hundred and fifty lectures that I have given from the Temple pulpit these last twenty-five years and realized that at no time had I discussed anti-semitism as a detached and separate phenomenon. Anti-semitism is involved in many of the issues that affect Jewish life and I'd discussed these; but I'd never approached anti-semitism as a distinct phenomenon. When I ask myself why, I answer that I've always looked on anti-semitism as a Christian, not a Jewish, problem. My task as a rabbi is to worry about the soul of Jews. I leave anti-semitism to my ministerial colleagues whose task is the soul of non-Jews. Anti-semitism is lodged in their souls, not ours. We have other prejudices, and I have other agendas.

You will not be surprised then if I propose to deal here not with anti-semitism as a discrete phenomenon (there would be little benefit in such an approach for this audience) but with a more immediate and personal question: why many in the American Jewish community seem to have lost their cool about anti-semitism. Why have Jewish Community Centers, synagogues and Federations organized hand-wringing panels about anti-semitism, what I call *oy gevalt* meetings? Swastika dubbings, cross burnings and nasty graffiti are no novelty. They've been around for centuries. Why all the tension just now? Is there a real threat? What does our reaction suggest about our state of mind and emotional set?

I take it as a given that we live in the real world. Utopia is not here or around the corner. Last year's presidential election suggests strongly that most Americans have recognized that our national power and prosperity is not unlimited. It has finally dawned on us that God has not guaranteed to us that our children will live more amply than we have. With the acceptance of a society of limits has come the recognition that many of our more

romantic hopes will not be realized. In the real world economics is a dismal science and prejudice is not readily eradicated. Anti-semitism will be a reality in 2181 and 2381 just as it is today. There is, I believe, a herd instinct built into the emotional makeup of the animal species. Spiritually we are created in the image of God, physically we are of the earth. All animals perceive the stranger as a potential danger. I can conceive of no situation in which human beings would not organize themselves into reference groups (by nation, language group, tribe, religion or family), and as long as there are families and communities, loyalties, there will be insiders and outsiders and anti-Jewish, anti-Catholic, anti-Vietnamese, anti-Ibo, anti-you-name-it prejudice. Prejudice, I am afraid, will last until God creates, as Jeremiah once prophesied, a new breed of human dowered with a new heart and a new spirit, and since I really do not expect that to happen I expect anti-semitism will be around for a

long time and will be exacerbated by society's frustration.

There is anti-semitism. At times one can and should discuss what particular tactic might be most useful as a response to a particular anti-semitic incident. I would not necessarily dissuade a group of young people who were determined to oppose a march through their neighborhood by the wandering band of American Nazis. I'd warn them that they could get hurt, but every human has the right to defend his dignity and his turf. At the same time, I am not convinced that the Jewish Defense League's program to organize camps where young Jews can learn to use firearms as elements of a para-military unit is a useful response to the problems we face. I am not convinced that the United States in 1981 is where Germany was in 1931 or even 1921. I wouldn't rule self-defense

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*A Reception  
To mark the official release  
by the State of Israel  
of a postage stamp to honor the contributions of  
Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver  
on Sunday, March 29, 1981  
at The Temple Branch  
between five and seven o'clock*

*Presentation will be made by  
Consul Asher Naim  
on behalf of the State of Israel*

## FROM THE RABBI'S DESK

(Continued)

out as a tactic if America were to change radically from what I perceive it to be. I am not a willing victim; but I simply don't believe that America is on the brink of housing another holocaust. "Never again" is a powerful slogan, but not necessarily an appropriate one. At this time, indeed, I find it in almost every way counter-productive.

Why then have many reacted to a few anti-semitic incidents with such tension and emotion that the JDL approach begins to seem somewhat creditable? I have come to the regrettable conclusion that some of us are paranoid. A young lawyer in the Temple came to me the other day and reported that a non-Jewish colleague had told him that his next door neighbors, Jews, had come to him and said: 'we can't be friends any longer because we can only trust our own.' That's paranoia.

I am also convinced that many of us have adopted a convenient double standard. Meir Kahane was in town this week. Kahane was convicted by Israeli courts for his leadership of a conspiracy designed to frighten, if not to kill, the Arab leaders of Hebron. He served time in Israel for that crime and for advocating anti-Arab violence. Yet, synagogues opened their halls to him. Several rabbis greeted him and was described in *The Cleveland Jewish News* simply as Rabbi Meir Kahane, "a controversial figure." Had a member of the Ku Klux Klan spoken at a local church I doubt those who welcomed Kahane would have been satisfied by the minister's explanation that the speaker was a God-fearing Christian and that freedom of speech required that he open his hall to the Klan. They would have written angry letters to any paper that described a Klan leader simply as "a controversial figure." Meir Kahane is a terrorist and, unfortunately, many Jews are not in the habit of calling a spade a spade when it applies to our own. We become exercised and demand government action when the Ku Klux Klan organizes camps in the south where young Christians can learn to bear arms to make sure that blacks, Vietnamese and Jews do not take over their turf. Can we overlook the fact that Meir Kahane is involved in the same kind of recruitment? When Kahane made this appeal to the young people of our Jewish community, and he did so at Hillel, apparently one of the staff encouraged enrollment in Kahane's camps.

I am also convinced that many of us have gotten into the habit of jumping to conclusions. We often see vandalism as an anti-semitic incident and part of a deep-seated conspiracy. If I were to say to you tonight that two Cleveland synagogues were torched this past week and that the Congregational Plenum or our Jewish Community Federation had been approached by the arsonists and told that a third synagogue would be burned unless a large amount of money were paid, many would decry an anti-semitic conspiracy. I have described precisely what has happened in the Roman Catholic community over the past three days. The diocese did not quickly relate these acts to nascent anti-Catholicism. Indeed, they recognized that they might be dealing with a Roman Catholic extortionist. If synagogues had been burned the arsonist might well have been a member of our community, yet, until this was discovered, many would be sure, given the mood that we're in, that we were under attack.

Two years ago the silver implements with which we dress the *Torot* in the Ark of the Main Temple were stolen. When the staff person who discovered their loss called to report the theft to me, he related it to other anti-semitic incidents. It was not. I am a member of a group of the senior ministers of the town who meet together and I knew that ritual silver was disappearing from churches all over town. As a matter of fact, many churches were also losing their stained glass windows. What we faced was simple theft, ugly, but not resurgent anti-semitism.

We live in a violent world. We live in a violent city. We're part of a violent society and many Jews fail to place the various incidents in the context of the kind of society we live in. We are conditioned to see ourselves as victims, but the question is whether there is a large scale, broadly based political or social conspiracy against Jews abroad in the land or whether what we are seeing is conventional society pathology and more of the all too familiar American savagery.

These have not been good years for America. We've had to accept defeat, frustration in Vietnam. We've had to accept limitations on our prosperity. Frustration breeds violence; but violence, however dangerous, is one thing and an organized, widespread conspiracy against Jewish survival in these United States is quite another. Yes, there has been an increase in anti-semitic incidents. There has been an increase in racist incidents of all kinds; but have we been selected as a special target? As yet, I think not. Is Auschwitz the standard by which we ought to be developing our social and political response? I think not.

You know me well enough to know that I don't believe in playing the ostrich, but I also don't believe in crying wolf. I'm convinced that many of us are on a rather childish emotional binge which is clouding our judgment and causing us to take a number of unwarranted and irrational actions.

Why am I concerned? In the first place, fear-born judgments tend to be both injudicious and self-defeating. In the second place, fear exudes a special aroma which the predator can sense and which whets his appetite. When Jews run to the newspaper and the media to denounce anti-semitism after a single incident of some kind with all of the hyperbole of which we are capable, when we see every incident as part of a Nazi-like conspiracy which threatens the Jewish people with genocide rather than for what it may be - in some cases professional thievery or juvenile delinquency or an erratic paranoid act - then we suggest to the paranoids in our society, to all those little people who know that the only way they'll ever be noticed is if they commit a crime which will make the headlines, that here's a way to make somebody cry out. Here's their headline.

It's time for a passionate people to practice some self-control. The evidence against a broad-gauged conspiracy theory is considerable. In 1973 the Arabs proclaimed an oil embargo and the oil costs began to escalate. OPEC claimed that all this was due to American support of Israel. Jews feared that a rash of bumper stickers would appear blaming us for the oil embargo. They did not appear and have not appeared. Over the last years this country has spent over a billion dollars a year in direct support of Israel, a billion dollars which might have been allocated to domestic uses. If the large pressure groups fighting for their funds

had been motivated by anti-semitism, they could have tailored a campaign to gain their funds. They did not. Just a few years ago the United States put its trade agreements with the Soviet Union in jeopardy in order to secure the release of Jewish prisoners of conscience. Commercial interests in the United States were deeply involved and unhappy that this embargo would lose them contracts and profits. Again, they could have orchestrated an anti-semitic campaign. They did not. For Jews this is not the best of worlds and this is not the worst of worlds, but it is certainly not the end of the world.

Let me try then to put recent events in what seems to me an appropriate context. Our reactions are related to the prevailing national mood of fear. When I came back to Cleveland twenty-five years ago few of the people I knew bothered to lock their homes. Today most homes have intricate and expensive electrical sensor devices. When I go to make a call in an apartment building I enter a cubicle, the kind I am ushered into when I visit somebody in prison. A voice identification is required. I'm screened by closed circuit television. Then I must decipher, as if I were a CIA agent, the number code which will tell me how to dial the telephone, and then, perhaps, somebody tells me the number of the apartment where I'm going. Many people I know are afraid to use the city.

Add frustration to fear. We were frustrated by the inability of our troops to gain their objectives in Vietnam, and that frustration continues over the inability of the government to gain its objectives in Afghanistan or El Salvador. We're frustrated that Washington isn't able to handle the nation's economic problems. We're frustrated by inflation which threatens the security which underpins our families and the institutions on which we depend.

Liberalism is dead not because Americans have suddenly become less socially conscious but because we were never as humane or altruistic as we considered ourselves. We looked on ourselves as a new and better breed of citizens when, to a large measure, our decency was simply a reflex of growing prosperity which created a situation where we could allow the poor and the blacks, and even our women, to share in greater measure in the American dream. No one had to give up anything.

The era of good will is over. The period of no cost social justice is over. We face a long, bitter political fight over who's going to give up the least. The issue is no longer can we allow the outcasts to enjoy what they think is right or even what we agree is their right; but how can we hold on to what we now have which we know to be right because we have it. If it weren't that issues of justice and principle were involved, I'd suggest that the image of American political life today is of a group of cogs squabbling over scraps; and I'd remind you that when dogs scrap over scraps there's a lot of howling and a few animals get hurt.

There's going to be a lot of howling over the next years and, inevitably, a lot of anger and bitterness. Many genteel reserves will break down. People are beginning to say openly what they've always felt, and some of that bile we won't want to hear. But before we get too self-righteous let's remember that the same pressures operate on us and the same breakdown on reserves takes place here. If you've listened to your friends, as I have, you'll perhaps agree with my observation that there's been more

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## FROM THE RABBI'S DESK

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concerns, justice, respect for parents, the avoidance of all idolatries, caring for our neighbor as we care for ourself.

This Holocaust fixation in some ways explains why many lost their cool, and so does the last election. The country has moved right and many Jews, for quite understandable reasons, are afraid of any move towards the right. Most Jewish families came to the United States because the governments of the privileged in Europe persecuted Jews. Our enemies were the established privileged classes, the established state churches, and all who were determined to maintain long established privileges. Once here American Jewry discovered that the domestic left consisted largely of ethnic and immigrant groups like ourselves struggling to escape the ghetto, and so was responsive to our needs.

Without in any way minimizing the long, sorry record of anti-semitism created and dispersed by the right; let us recognize that the left is not innocent. It's not a question of one being good and one being bad. They're both what they are.

In 1881 five young Russian revolutionaries, children of the privileged class, led by a twenty-eight year old girl who was the daughter of the former commanding general of the military garrison in St. Petersburg, assassinated Czar Alexander II. Russia immediately reacted by blaming the Jews. Russia was a country which had only one outgroup, and that outgroup were the five million Jews who lived in the undesirable western parts of the country. Jews were held responsible for the anarchism and socialism which these Russian-Orthodox young people turned terrorist espoused. The pogroms began and the great exodus of the Jewish community from Russia followed. I cite these events not to remind you of the obvious, that the pogroms were begun by and supported by the right, but to recall for you that the young leftists in the Soviet Union, the group who had assassinated the Czar, applauded the pogroms. Here they said, was evidence that peasants were beginning to become politically conscious. If they beat the heads of a few Jews, so be it. It was in a good cause and they were only Jews.

Among the scriptures of the left is Karl Marx's scurrilous pamphlet, *The World Without Jews*. Post-war Communist Poland has known several bloody pogroms and vicious anti-semitic purges organized by and stimulated by its government. Need I remind you of Soviet anti-semitism. The Socialist Workers Party and the National Labor Party, the extreme left wing groups in the United States, have been circulating virulent anti-semitic and anti-Israel literature. We have all seen pictures of the signs that are held aloft outside the Federal Courthouse where Demjanjuk is being tried as a Nazi camp guard: "The Holocaust is a Hoax", "Six Million Lies", and most of us have assumed that these were the scrawls of the local Ukrainians doing their worst. These particular signs were not devised by Ukrainians but by Trotskyite National Socialist Workers Party members who joined the demonstration for their own purposes. Europe's radical left have provided many of the terrorists who have attacked Israelis from Munich to Entebbe. It is the left in America which has the most 'trouble' understanding Israel's right to survive.

Anti-semitism is not limited to the left or to the

right. It exists. It was not the right-wing which devised the phony refugee solutions of the late nineteen-thirties, it was the Roosevelt government. It was not the left which imposed the immigration restrictions of the nineteen-twenties, it was the Coolidge government. As long as we live in the real world much will happen we don't like. The question is how dangerous is the hour and what should we do about our situation.

My own analysis is that it is a serious mistake to see America 1981 in the light of Germany 1921 or 1931. Generals are always prepared to fight the last war and Jews are always prepared to fight the last Nazis.

The obvious must be said: constitutional democracy is well established here. There are statutory limits to what a legislature can do. There are legal limits to what a police force can do. Why is this important? Because, fanned by flames of frustration or fear, the popular mood can swing rapidly in one direction or another. In America the mood can't always carry all before it. This leads me to suggest that Jews should be very careful before they sponsor any constitutional amendment because once the nation gets in the habit of amending its basic law almost any amendment can go through. We ought particularly to be wary of any constitutional convention where the agenda is opened-ended and ought never underestimate the Constitution as a guarantor of our rights.

We should also not forget that our society is infinitely complex. I've never quite understood the term, cultural pluralism, but, at the very least, it suggests that the antis have a problem. Whom should they blame? There were Huguenots in Catholic France and Puritans in Anglican England, but across Christian Europe everyone was a member of the mystic body of Christ except for gypsies and Jews. We were the omnipresent outsider, hence the favorite scapegoat and target. There was no other.

Here there are many outsiders. Today the Klan has a real problem. Whom to target? They have had to exclude Catholics from their hit list because it was just too complicated to include them any longer. But even so, their attacks remain scattergun. In the southwest Klan burblings are now directed against Mexican Americans. They have blacks, Jews, Vietnamese and the Cambodians and many others to attack. Hate groups have a problem agreeing on the target which will pull the most converts. There are too many targets for a scapegoat consensus to develop readily. American society is different to this extent: no one really knows any longer who the majority is. I have some WASP friends who claim they are a minority, and I think in many ways they are. In France you know when you're talking about a Frenchman you know whom you're talking about. He speaks French. He likes wine. He's Catholic. When you talk about an Englishman you know you're not talking about a Welshman or Scotsman but an Anglican member of the establishment. What image comes to mind when you talk about the quintessential American? There is no one image, and so those who are prejudiced, and everybody is prejudiced to a certain degree, have a terrible problem, thank God. In the excess of targets lies some of our safety.

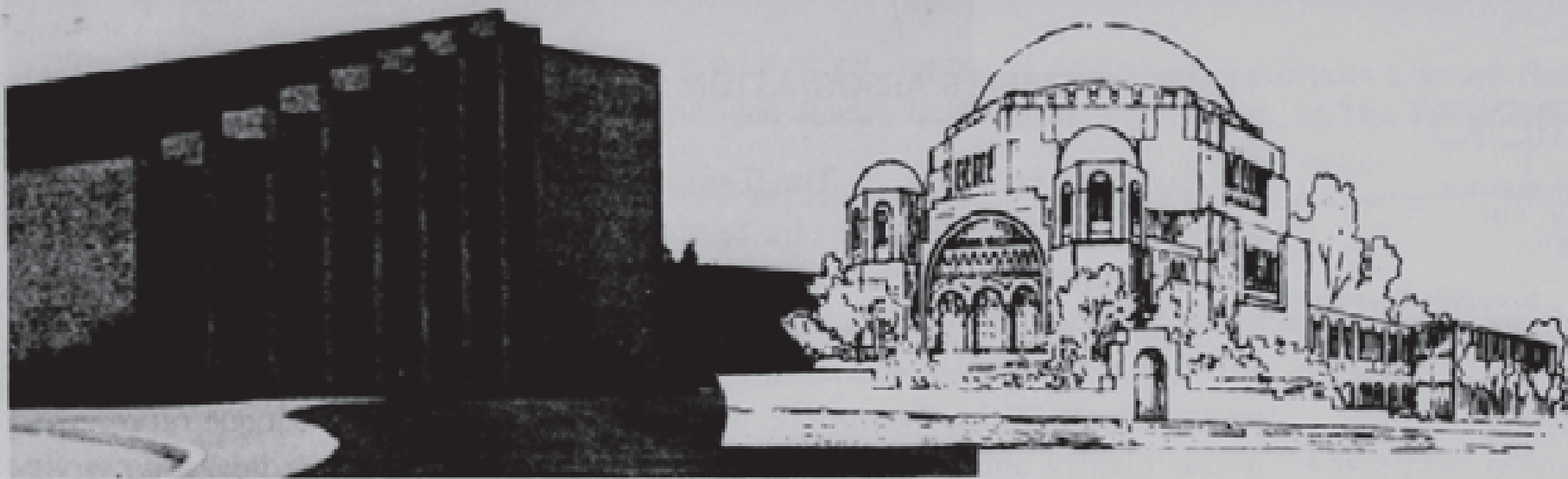
I have suggested that we should loosen up a bit about anti-semitism and concentrate more on the positive aspects of being Jewish. When being

Jewish is compelling and satisfying, an anti-semitic incident is not likely to be a shattering experience. Let's shape our lives and our communities so they stand for something. Ask yourself if you were a Jew brought here from the Soviet Union what would you feel about this community? I think you would be extremely grateful to be here and warmed by the hospitality of this city. You wouldn't be put off by the Cleveland winter because in Moscow it's worse, and you would be thankful for a job provided by a Jewish businessman, for the English lessons provided by the community and for the activities to which your children were welcomed by this city's Jewish children. Yet, you'll be left with a real problem; what does being Jewish mean to all these Jews? How is this Jewish community Jewish? What does it stand for? Scholarship? Learning? Piety? Social consciousness? The other day I picked up the *Cleveland Magazine* and read a story about the Cleveland Jewish community written by a nice man, a born-again Christian. What did our community represent to him? Some able rich men and some socially concerned women who were get-up-and-go types to whom it was a matter of great moment that a rabbi said a *motzi* in a once restricted social club. Remember Judaism's symbiotic relations with anti-semitism. What do we stand for? Survival? Survival for what? If somebody's going to hate me I want them to hate me because I stand for something. I want them to hate me because I believe in justice and democracy and that they were not entitled to special privileges.

I suggest that many lost their cool in 1980 because as a community we're not so sure what we are anymore. We've been worrying about what they think, what they like not who we are as Jews and what being Jewish means to us. The confused and the empty are the easily panicked.

These incidents suggest that the real world is not as nice as we'd like it to be. I've always known that. One of the truths about the real world is that much of it is anti-semitic and anti-a-lot of things, and that if we're going to live in that world we should do so with becoming pride and as a meaningful presence. Our reactions to evidence of the real world suggests that we've got a lot of soul-searching to do and a lot of seeking to do. We've got to establish the positive content of our Jewish commitment. When we do, a nasty word, a closed door or graffiti on the wall of our synagogues will not shake us. As Jews we have prided ourselves that our tradition is not a pie-in-the-sky tradition but a realistic tradition for real people who live in the real world. I espouse a civic agenda and a spiritual agenda which is constructive, not defensive, long-sighted and not mesmerized by shadows which were and might be again; but are not now indicative of a major storm front.

*Daniel Jeremy Silver*



February 8, 1981  
Vol. LXVII, No. 11

# The Temple Bulletin

## From the Rabbi's Desk: RELIGION, WHAT IS IT?

The sermon of December 21, 1980 is produced here in response to numerous requests.

If you want to look up some material on Judaism in the Public Library you would go to the shelves marked Religion. I teach at Case Western Reserve University in the Department of Religion. The activities of this congregation are protected by the First Amendment to the Bill of Rights which says simply "that Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

By convention and by consensus Judaism is a religion. Because many judge an individual example, in this case Judaism, by their attitude towards the larger classification, I thought it might be well if we spent a few minutes with no other purpose than to try to understand the phenomenon known as religion, a word most everybody uses and almost everybody uses with a different significance.

When I ask students for their definition some tell me that religion is superstition. Others tell me that religion is mystification, a glorification of that which we do not yet understand. Others tell me that religion represents all that is good, valid and valuable, a consecration of virtue. All of us carry prejudgments about religion around with us. Prejudgment, incidentally, is just a nice way of saying prejudice.

Those for whom religion represents all that is good, valid and valuable are prepared, almost indiscriminately, to support anything that goes under its banner. I remember a businessman who told me that he wouldn't hire anybody who wasn't religious. An ad campaign some years ago used the theme: 'the family that prays together stays together.' On the other hand there are those who believe that religion represents credulity or an attempt by crafty ecclesiastics to take people's minds off their problems so that they are not liable to attack the privileged and the established. Marx damned religion as the opiate of the masses.

I am not interested in establishing a publishable dictionary definition, but I'd like to clear up our understanding so that it will be easier for us to

think without prejudgment about our religion, Judaism.

Point one. Religions existed long before anybody knew there was such a thing as religion. Religion is a universal phenomenon. Any group which is cohesive and shares a single culture, has a religion.

The Hebrew word for religion is *dat*. Most of you have either spoken the word or had the word spoken to you because it's part of the traditional wedding formula *Ha'rei at-mekudeshet li... k'idat Moshe v'Yisrael*, be thou consecrated unto me by this ring according to the *dat*, according to the practices, the religion of Moses and Israel.

The Bible never uses *dat* as a term for religion. *Dat* occurs only in the book of Esther, a late scroll of the Persian period, where it designates a royal decree. When Esther proposes to invite Ahasuerus, the king, and Haman, the Prime Minister, to a

banquet in her chambers she is told by her advisers that she may not enter the royal audience chamber uninvited because this is the *dat*, the official imperial practice, of Persia.

Over the next centuries *dat* came to be applied not only to imperial decrees but to the decrees of the King of kings, to God's own decrees. The *Mishnah*, the second, third century code of Jewish law has a section known as *Ketubot*, which deals with the marriage contract, the terms of the contract and the ways in which the *Ketubah* may be dissolved. Among its rules is one which stipulates that certain women, if divorced, cannot claim what is stipulated as theirs in the marriage contract because they have violated the *dat Moshe v'yahudit*, the practices of Moses and the Jews. In the *Tosefta*, a slightly later code this phrase is changed into the more familiar *dat Moshe Yisrael*. So by the third century of our era the word *dat* has come to

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## SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES

February 8, 1981  
10:30 a.m.  
The Temple Branch

Temple Women's Association  
Service

THE SYNAGOGUE: A  
SYMBOL FOR ETERNITY

February 15, 1981  
10:30 a.m.  
The Temple Branch

Rabbi  
DANIEL JEREMY SILVER

will speak on

ISRAEL FACES AN ELECTION

Friday Evening Service — 5:30 - 6:10 — The Temple Chapel  
Sabbath Service — 11:15 a.m. — The Branch



## FROM THE RABBI'S DESK

(Continued)

describe the God-mandated practices of the Jew.

The Greco-Roman world was a world of travelers and academicians and the first culture to become conscious of the differences in religious practices of a wide variety of tribes and peoples. They used a word, *religio*, which meant simply that which is tied down and bound together, to describe the practices of a given community. In the ancient world all customs and laws were religious since all had the sanction of the god or the gods. *Religio* defined religious practices.

By the time of the Gemarrah, the second of the major law codes of our people, we find *dat* used in the sense of the separate codes and practices of various peoples - their religions. In the ancient world when a woman intermarried she took on the laws and the practices of her husband. The Talmud uses the phrase, *le'hamir dat*, to change one's laws, to describe a woman who intermarries and so becomes subject to a non Jewish set of laws - an apostate.

In time men discovered that there are similarities in form at least between one *dat* and another, and *dat*, religion, emerged as the term which defined the general area of sacred beliefs and sacred practices.

In Europe in the Middle Ages, those who wrote dictionaries defined religion as faith in God, particularly the Christian faith. Their focus was less on the practices and the customs of many traditions than on the beliefs of their tradition. During the Age of Discovery as travelers discovered here, there and everywhere shrines, temples, hymns, ikons, scriptures and holy men, religion came to describe Hinduism, Buddhism, the Confucian tradition, Islam and Judaism as well as Christianity. Since these traditions had much in common religion came to be accepted as a definition of institutions having similar forms and institutions: temples, shrines, scriptures, priests, holy men, magical rites, sacrifices, prayer services and the like.

When scholars lay the more primitive religions alongside the better known classical religions they found they could not satisfactorily extrapolate an all encompassing common denominator. Some religions had a written scripture. Islam has the Koran; Christianity has the New Testament; we have the Tanach; but other religions have only an oral tradition. Some religions have pagodas, stupas, shrines and temples. Others worship in the open air. Some religions have holy men and shamans; some have no priesthood at all. Some have hymns and sacred dances; some worship in absolute silence. Some believe in God. Some in gods. The Confucian tradition believes in the Mandate of Heaven, cosmic order, but not in a supernatural power which could be called a god.

Obviously, a new approach had to be taken to the definition of religion and the question which began to be asked had to do with function rather than form. Why are there religions? What basic human need does religion serve? What is the function of religion in the social order? It now became apparent that religion represents the attempt by a

community to declare sacred, valid and ultimately meaningful, a certain set of values, a vision of life and a set of assumptions about the importance of specific actions. Religion consecrates a certain understanding of what is fit and appropriate. "It has been told you, o man, what is good." Religion is the way a group of people declares its code of ethics to be right and beyond question; its social structure to be appropriate and beyond question; and its view of life, death and immortality to be right and beyond question.

A modern definition of religion might take this form: religion represents that cluster of ideas, myths, rituals, ceremonies, hopes, visions and institutions through which a society conforms and affirms its basic attitudes towards life and its familiar affirmations about values.

We are born into a particular time, into a particular place, into a particular society, without any act of decision on our part. Its values may be congenial to our nature or not. Being curious we ask questions about what was before and what is now and what will happen next. Accidents will happen. Illness will occur to us and those we care about. We will die. There is no way of proving that our understanding of these events is a valid one. We are taught to conform to a certain set of customs, rituals, promises and family relationships. There's no way of proving that our set of values is better than another or that what we believe to be right is in fact right. Yet, since confusion paralyzes, there is a need to transcend doubt. Indecision weakens our resolve so there is a need to transcend our perplexities. Religion is the social mechanism by which a society organizes and declares sacred its practices, its values and its vision. Sanity requires religion.

Religion exists in all societies at all times. A fine tutor of history I knew at college used to say that religion has become an elective in modern society. He meant that only one in two Americans has joined a church or a synagogue. Our world has developed what sociologists call neutral space in order to allow people of different religions to live and work together without having to give up their religious identities. In a tribe or clan where every one is bound by the same set of consecrated customs, the same religion, there is no room for an outsider. In our world membership in a religion is no longer automatic and in America many have opted out of the traditional affiliations, so men like my tutor feel that religion is an elective. Some take. Some do not.

The tutor still defines religion in the old fashioned way as those groups society calls religions: Christianity, Judaism, Islam etc. However, when we look at religion as the cluster of ideas, myths, rituals and institutions by which a group consecrates, affirms and confirms a set of values, visions and attitudes, a different picture emerges. It became apparent not only that religion is a "universal phenomenon", but also surprisingly that this is one of the great ages of faith, perhaps the greatest age of religious creativity that the world has ever known. I speak not only of the renaissance of Islam and the impact of the population explosion in Latin and South America on Roman Catholicism, but of Fascism, Communism and Maoism, religions which have made tens of millions of converts in

our century either by the compelling force of their arguments or by the compelling force of their armaments. The old traditional religions may no longer be universally compelling but religion remains a universal need and our age has, if anything, an urgent need. No one can live without some set of consecrated beliefs which they feel defines, shapes, gives meaning to life for them; and a society which endures a period of convulsion turns urgently to religion.

I always have trouble convincing some in my class that Communism is a religion. They tell me it's anti-religious and on one level they're right. Communist ideology affirms that religion, which it defines in the old-fashioned way as the existing European religions, is a propaganda device designed to take men's minds off practical solutions to their problems by preaching the virtue of deferred expectations and patience; life is a trial, you'll have your reward in the World to Come. In Communist theory religion stands in the way of consciousness-raising among the proletariat and the peasantry.

There is some truth to this charge, but Marxist "anti-religion ideology" does not prove that Communism itself is not a religion. No enmity is more bitter than that which can break out between religions. No wars are more vindictive than religious wars. I describe Communism as a classic authoritarian western religion still in a medieval caste. There is a truth, clear and defined; Pravda means the truth. There is a sacred office which defines orthodoxy and condemns heresy. There is an inquisition which sends heretics to Siberia or to the Gulag Archipelago. There are the ecclesiastics, the cadres of the Community Party. There is a scripture, *Das Kapital*, and a Rashi, Lenin's commentaries. There is a messianist doctrine based on the claim that there are iron laws which make it inevitable that history follow a certain course until the end of days when a dictatorship of the proletariat will occur only to wither away, leaving utopia, a period of justice and peace for all men. Communism has spread in the same way that Christianity originally spread by the conversion of political leaders by the appeal to its gospel and by force; and remains in control through the activities of a state church which maintains a parochial school system. Communism is not simply an economic ideology. It is a religion, a cluster of ideas, institutions, visions, rituals, myths, which consecrate, conform and affirm a certain set of values.

My students live in a world where there is no state church and no authorized ideology. They see that many do not belong to a church or to a synagogue, so they wonder how I can say that everybody has a religion. By way of an answer, I introduce them to the concept of civil religion. In a country like the United States there is a set of ideas which are implicit in the national institutions and which form the base of the majority's code of beliefs and ethics. In America the Scripture is the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. There are massive commentaries on the Scriptures, the decisions of the court system. There are venerated patriarchs: Jefferson, Lincoln, Wilson and Roosevelt. There are the holidays: the Fourth of July and Thanksgiving. There are confirmed and affirmed values: individual

(continued)

## FROM THE RABBI'S DESK

(Continued)

freedom, social contract and citizenship responsibility.

How can a loose set of values be called a religion? These values are part of the social fabric deeply held, culturally formative, and assumed to be redemptive. We take their rightness for granted though we cannot prove that they are right. We consecrate our lives to those values and base national policy on them though there is no way of proving that this is the proper form for human organization. Deep down we believe that ultimately the rest of the world will come to our understanding and our national policies take the goal into account. Our messianism is not as confident and as certain as Communist ideology, but it's there. It can be stated this way: with the spread of technology and learning the democratic way with its reverence for individual liberty will spread around the world. Ultimately the underdeveloped countries will develop and take on the forms which we have found to be successful, become like us, partners in a world where all people enjoy justice and freedom.

This is an age thirsty for religion because it's a confused and convulsed age. All values are being questioned. All social forms are being reshaped. All learning is being questioned. All of the matrices of our lives, our sense of self, marriage, family, responsibility, citizenship, are being tossed about in the maelstrom of modern urban life.

Religion exists because we would be paralyzed without it. The religious revolutions of our time have occurred because a convulsive society would be unable to act if it didn't bind to itself and consecrate a set of coherent values which it affirmed as sacred.

The problem with the new religions and some of the old ones is that they maintain that theirs is the only way and that all ultimately must come to it. Medieval Islam make this claim. The Roman Catholic church takes this position. So does Communism. Other traditions can live with the idea that every religion has its sacred and special message, and that this message is functional in the sense

that society is organized around it and could not live without it. They sense that we live in a pluralistic society and that we must appreciate the force of other messages and allow others the integrity of their beliefs. Religious faith is hard to restrain and has built in tendency towards imperialism. I obviously believe that what I believe is right and, therefore, it's difficult for me to accept that you don't see eye to eye or share my concern. For your sake or the world's I must bring you around. How do we prove that our values are sacred, consecrated and holy? It used to be that all we had to say was that God spoke to Moses at Mount Sinai and six hundred thousand people were there who heard God's voice; but we know now that every religion has a myth of this kind which claims to confirm and authenticate its truth. What establishes the rightness of our message? "By your deeds shall you be known." Some religions enhance personality; others demand abject submission. The proof lies not in the founding myth but in the ability of the religion to found and support a healthy and creative society.

Religion is. Religion is elemental. You can't do without it. All religions are functional, but function does not necessarily prove that a religion adds to the sum total of human happiness. Religion must be judged like any other social phenomenon, by its consequences, by its impact on the people who belong, and the world of which it is a part. Does religion turn people in on themselves, blind them to other truths and encourage a tendency towards fanaticism? Does it try to impose its ideas on society by force? Does it encourage the individual conscience or demand total submission to its teaching and authority?

Religion is universal. It exists everywhere at all times and always will. Our prejudgments about religion are based on an outdated identification of religion with a shopping list of specific religions. Judge Judaism in terms of itself. Judge Judaism in terms of its impact on human beings. Has Judaism made for good? Has it produced sensitive, intelligent and concerned citizens? Has it turned its devoted away from humanity or towards it?

Has it tried to develop individual judgment or force us to submit to its demands.

Religion must be judged by its consequences and judged carefully because religion is a very, very dangerous phenomenon.

Anything you believe in and believe to be sacred is a value you will not compromise. Anything you believe in or believe to be sacred you will feel another person, your children, your spouse, your friend, your neighbor, your community should adopt; and you will move heaven and earth to make this happen. It's hard to accept that another intelligent, sensitive and moral human being will not see what seems incontrovertible to you. Few religions have avoided the temptation to twist the sword and bring others into heaven.

Religious imperialism underlies our world's problems. Our political tensions represent not simply competing national entities seeking salt water ports or oil of competing religions. When historians write the tale of our century they will describe it in the same terms that we now use for the seventeenth century which, you will recall, was a century of religious war between Protestants and Catholics.

Religions are necessary. Psychologists speak of a will to believe. We have to transcend doubt and confusion and stand on some kind of solid ground in order to be able to step forward vigorously into the future. Religions are functional. Judge you must because religion can precipitate the mass suicides at Jonestown and holy wars, or organize civil rights marches and hunger centers. Each religion has its unique form and therefore makes its own special impact on the world and on its social order. "By their deeds shall you judge them."

I commend Judaism to you. We have a good religion, but not all religions are good and not all forms of Judaism are equally good. Religion requires a great deal of judgment and not prejudgment, and if I've convinced you of that, I've accomplished what I set out to accomplish.

*Daniel Jeremy Silver*

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## THE TEMPLE WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION PRESENTS its MARCH FIRST TUESDAY

DICK DUGAN in "A Picture's Worth a Thousand Words" — March 3 at The Temple Branch

DICK DUGAN, well known *Plain Dealer* cartoonist brings the world of drawing and satire to The Temple.

Lucky members of the audience will take home large charcoal drawings suitable for framing.

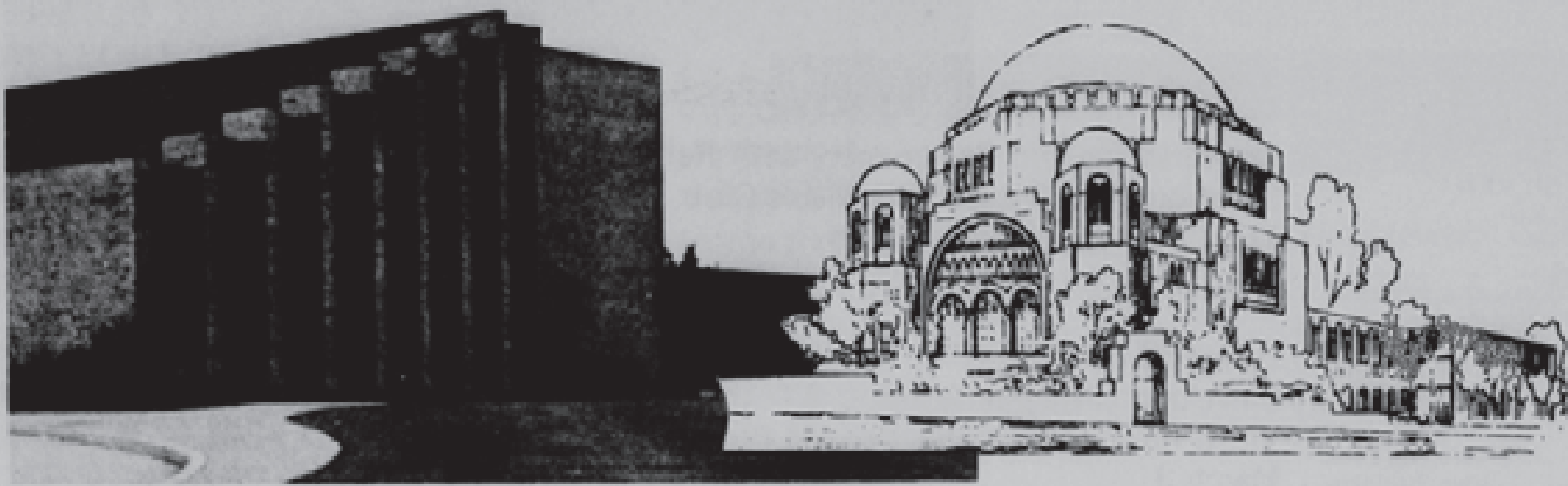
12:00 noon A delicious hot lunch for \$2.50. Reservations are a must and close Sunday, March 1.

1:00 p.m. DICK DUGAN beguiles you with his quick wit and cartooning ability.

There is no charge for the program if you are unable to come for lunch.

Guests are welcome! Reservations: Agnes Leidner, 233-1584 — Estelle Wolfe, 371-0939





January 25, 1981  
Vol. LXVIII, No. 11

# The Temple Bulletin

From the Rabbi's Desk: **THE JEWISH GANGSTER – THE SHATTERING OF A STEREOTYPE**  
The sermon of November 23, 1980 is produced here in response to numerous requests.

The Saturday night special of the Roman world was called a *sicca*. It was a small curved dagger sharply honed on both sides which could be carried hidden in the arm of a toga. After the Romans conquered Judea in the first century B.C.E. a number of nice Jewish boys began to carry the *sicca*. They came to be known as *sicari*. They were, depending on whom you talked to, the Robinhoods of the Jewish community protecting the poor against tax collectors and other agents of Roman oppression or simple hoodlums, extortioners and racketeers who used the cover of patriotism to line their pockets and to satisfy their jungle instincts. Historians debate whether we are to classify the *sicari* as hoodlums and gangsters who preyed as all gangsters do upon the weak or as Jewish patriots who rallied Judea to rebellion by attacking quislings who had made peace with Rome and money off Rome. The debate is not settled and probably will never be. Gangsters, like all of us, are complex creatures. Incidentally, if you ever want to know why the man who denounced Jesus to the Romans is called Judas Iscariot, the New Testament labels him as Judah the *sicari*, Judah the gangster.

Gangsters and hoodlums establish a symbiotic relationship with elements of their society. They prey on it and are part of it. During Prohibition, when gangsters bestrode the land, whenever one was brought to trial there were always a procession of little people from their neighborhood who came to testify to the good deeds that the crook had done for them. The kings of the underworld make it a habit to protect the weak from the powers of the underworld. The United States government itself treated with Lucky Luciano, the infamous Italian syndicate leader, when he was a prisoner in Dannamora in New York State. World War II had broken out and Washington wanted to be certain of the patriotism of the longshoremen who were loading the ships which carried war supplies to the Allies. So officials went to the prison to get Luciano's agree-

ment to use his influence to see that the longshoremen would work and work with a will. He did and they did. The government went back to the prison several years later when we were about to invade Sicily and they wanted to make sure of the support of the Sicilian Mafia. Luciano agreed and we were given that support.

No one is undimensional. Everyone has several sides to his personality. The Bible says that there is no man so righteous that he sins not; and we could add that there is no one so evil that he doesn't have an occasional gentle impulse. In this perspective it seems passing strange that we Jews tend to have a romantic undimensional understanding of our history. It reads something like this. Jews have long been gentle scholars and Jewish mothers. We have watched with tolerant wisdom and endured with tolerable patience the violent activities of the world

about us, but few of us have participated in them except as victims. Certainly no nice Jewish boy would ever be involved in violent crime.

If this were true, it would mean that Jews came to this country from communities already in an advanced state of disintegration and passed through the worst, most impacted, most impoverished areas of first settlement – the East Side of New York, the South Side of Boston – without being touched by their poverty. The myth is that we worked hard, kept off the streets and made our way to NYU and CCNY and into dentistry and law, and a middle class life. No one fell by the wayside. No one ended in prison. Presumably, we alone, of all the peoples who passed through the immigration experience, passed through unscarred.

(Continued inside)

## SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES

January 25, 1981  
10:30 a.m.  
The Temple Branch

Rabbi  
PAUL JOSEPH

will speak on

OUR "HUMPTY DUMPTY"  
AND "CHICKEN LITTLE"  
SYNDROMES

February 1, 1981  
10:30 a.m.  
The Temple Branch

Rabbi  
DANIEL JEREMY SILVER

will speak on

DANZIG AND GDNSK,  
A FOOTNOTE TO  
POLAND'S CRISIS

Friday Evening Service – 5:30 - 6:10 – The Temple Chapel  
Sabbath Service – 11:15 a.m. – The Branch

## FROM THE RABBI'S DESK (Continued)

Some years ago Golda Meir played to this myth when she said, "I can forgive the Arabs everything, except the fact that they forced our boys to kill." Now the *sicari* were nice Jewish boys. David was a nice Jewish boy. We tend to think of David as a neurasthenic poetic type who played on his harp and sang with such sweetness that he could quiet the evil spirits that raged in Saul. That's one side of the David story. There's another. The sweet singer was also a professional mercenary. He was the youngest son of a family which had too many sons. To survive he hired himself out as a janissary to the Philistines. He was so successful at his profession that he became a captain of mercenaries. It was his control of these Hessians that enabled David to capture Jerusalem, make it his capital and become King.

The *sicari* were nice Jewish boys. David was a nice Jewish boy. Some of you may remember when soon-to-be-governor, Thomas Dewey, prosecuted the Lepke syndicate in New York. Facing prosecution, Lepke's crime syndicate set out on a campaign to assassinate all those who might testify against them. At least a thousand men and women were killed by these assassins who came to be known in the press as Murder Incorporated. Lepke was a nice Jewish boy. Murder Incorporated was a group of nice Jewish boys.

It's time, for reasons of accuracy, if nothing else, that we look honestly at our record. Jewish history is not simply a history of scholar saints and in some ways the colorful and more compelling because of that fact. We have had our ruffians as well as rabbis, and sometimes rabbis who are ruffians.

During Prohibition the revenueurs raided a home in the 105th Street area and found a still in the basement. The owner was brought to court. He was a Hasidic rabbi. The papers reported a rather comic court session which included Elliot Ness and the Talmud. The rabbi quoted to the Judge the portions which indicated that he needed fermented wine for a Kiddush. The judge, only mildly amused, threw the case out of court and told the revenueurs they had more important business than persecuting a poor rabbi. That's a nice Jewish story, but a few years later this same rabbi was arrested by Federal Customs officers on the docks of New York for his role in an international ring which was smuggling diamonds from Antwerp to the United States.

When I was of the age when we read *Treasure Island* no hero was more exciting than a pirate. Yes, there were Jewish pirates and I often think we'd have fewer problems of attention in religious school if we'd teach some of the stories about Jewish pirates. I used to thrill to the tales of John Lafitte, the successor to Bluebeard. Lafitte was pirate admiral who commanded the pirates' navy at Baratania and a nice Jewish boy who was in fact married to a nice Jewish girl by the name of Levine. Actually, his story ends up in an appropriate Sunday School way. Lafitte knew his way through the bayous of the Mississippi delta and during the War of 1812 the United States government had to treat with him in order to repulse the British attack on New Orleans. Lafitte was so helpful that he and his

six brothers, all Jews, all pirates, were mentioned in dispatches by Andrew Jackson and granted a full and unconditional pardon for their piratical activities. Lafitte ended his life as a successful New Orleans merchant.

The shtetl, where the immigrants came from, had lost its economic base and its spirit had been broken before the era of mass migration. The authority of the rabbinate had been weakened by its willingness to throw its authority to the few Jewish privileged and by its preoccupation with *kaballah* and *pilpul* during an era of sweeping social change.

The factory workers of Vilna, Warsaw and Lodz were not stereotype scholar workers meeting to write socialist manifestos in high-minded cells. They were physical types, street people, people of limited education who had broken with medieval culture and who were trying to find their way into a new world where class solidarity was taking over from clan society. Those who came to America included a large number of young people who were estranged from their background.

People came piecemeal rather than as whole families. Sometimes what the family back home heard from an immigrant father was a letter which included a *ger* for the left-behind wife. The Lower East Side of New York and similar areas of first settlement were slums. There was no privacy. Children had to go on the street for their play and on the street they learned lessons that they would not have learned in their homes.

The girls particularly suffered. Most came over illiterate. Jewish life was indifferent to educating its girls, so unskilled girls, of ten, twelve, and fourteen, had little choice but to go to work ten, twelve or fourteen hours a day in sweat shops. A girl who went to school at say twelve may not have known how to read or do simple mathematics. She had no background and much temptation. Just beyond the Lower East Side then was a world of expensive stores, the Great White Way, and excitement. How they yearned to reach out and become part of it. Crime and prostitution, like sports and the performing arts, were ways of escaping the ghetto and, not surprisingly, many took what they thought was their only chance. It was an era in which social mobility existed side by side with social pathology.

You may remember that about three years ago *The History of the Jews of Cleveland* was published with much pomp and circumstance. At that time I criticized the book as presenting a rather institutional and high-minded view of our community, which did not draw a full picture of what had been and therefore was not a good base to understand what is and will be.

Take the issue of prostitution. In *The History of the Jews in Cleveland* you won't find a single reference to prostitution in our city. Our stereotype is that of the Jewish mother who would kill herself rather than let a daughter get out of hand. The Jewish mother is an American creation, a product of these immigrant ghettos where a mother had to use whatever means she possessed in order to maintain her family. The father worked ten, twelve, fourteen hours a day, six days a week, or he peddled and was away from the home for weeks on end. The children couldn't play in the home.

Every bit of space was used. They played in the streets. The East Side's streets were what streets are and always have been in American slums, a place of violent ideas and tawdry inducements.

Not all the girls who came had mothers. Many women had fled to the cities of Poland to escape the limitations of their homes. Modern ideas were sensed in the shtetl. Being unskilled and illiterate these girls had little opportunity to make their way. In New York they faced two choices: to work in the sweat shops and spend their youth slaving over a machine, or to wear pretty clothes, join a fast set and jump out of a world in which they felt themselves drowning. Many chose the second way. Actually Jews proved uniquely susceptible to prostitution, so much so that in 1911 an informal but high-ranking conference was held in London on The Suppression of Prostitution among Jewish Girls and Women. Jewish prostitution was a world-wide problem. We have few accurate figures but we do know that in 1909 in Buenos Aires there were 199 brothels of which 102 were run by Jewish madames, and that one-half of the prostitutes in those brothels were Jews. Prostitution existed because of the restlessness, the breaking away, the poverty, the lack of privacy, the desire to be part of the larger society and the emotional confusion of the women of the immigrant generation. It could hardly be otherwise.

When I was a student at the Hebrew Union College I served a congregation on weekends in the town of Danville, Illinois. Danville never had more than sixty or seventy Jewish families, but every Yom Kippur two elderly ladies stayed with me in shul all day and enjoyed talking with each other during the break. It was a shul which had been going on for many years. Both women were then in their high eighties. One of them was a sister of the Rosenwalds of Sears & Roebuck fame and the other was the retired Jewish madame of Danville's brothel. If Danville had a madame, Cleveland had several.

Perhaps there's another lesson. At least there's something we ought to think about. There is a great deal of talk about the need to revive city neighborhoods and to make life livable in an urban environment, but I wonder if you can revive the neighborhoods and use them as an immigrant settlement at the same time. You can't use the city as a way station into America and at the same time expect to be able to create stable and secure neighborhoods, suburban security in an urban maelstrom. As long as there is poverty, as long as there is immigration, internal or external, so long will crime be part of the urban scene. The two programs are incompatible unless you surround apartment complexes as the medievals did their castles with moats and mounted patrols and have police ride protection on every RTA bus.

I wonder how social thinkers twenty years hence will react to the conversation and planning which aims at the establishing of intown housing areas for the middle-classes. You can do it provided you don't bring in Puerto Ricans, Cubans, Dominicans, Haitians, Vietnamese, Laotians, etc., if you seal your borders and allow a generation or two to complete the task of acculturizing the American Indian and the black who are now going through. But if we intend to have open borders and to be a

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## FROM THE RABBI'S DESK

(Continued)

land of refuge for the oppressed, then we're not going to be able to have secure city neighborhoods. There has to be some kind of physical separation between incompatible societies, one which has the wherewithal to live in a modern complex environment and another that is just beginning the process of learning.

I know that crime is mobile. I know that most crime in the impacted areas is black on black and poor on poor. It's unfortunate, but it's part of the price every new immigrant generation pays before it emerges into the larger society; and the point is that they emerge. Three quarters of Cleveland's black community are now in the middle-class and well over half no longer live in the center city.

As long as groups are passing through the immigrant stage, the gangster stage, the prostitution stage, so long will our cities contain areas like the Tenderloin, areas of violence, crime; and as long, also, as we forget that acculturation is an inevitable process which requires at least a generation gone, so long will we make some serious planning mistakes.

If you look at Cleveland's *History* you will find one paragraph on crime; and it deals with juvenile delinquency, not adult crime. We're told that Jewish newsboys in the 1890's appeared in court in surprising numbers; we're not told why. We're not told about the gang war which raged over control of street corners from which one could peddle papers for a penny apiece. We're given a quotation from Rabbi Wolsey deploring the gambling parlors along Woodland Avenue which were attracting nice Jewish boys. And there's almost a throw-away line which indicates that several hundred Jewish boys a year appeared in Juvenile Court. We're not told for what crimes, only that this was a matter of concern to the social work professionals. Several hundred Jewish juveniles appearing in court each year, but no attempt is made to analyze their crimes, their sentences, how many were repeaters, how many grew up to be the syndicate leaders and how many grew up to be the leading citizens.

Obviously, there was social pathology in the Woodland and 105th Street areas. There always is where there is poverty, broken homes, orphaned children, gambling and gangs. The spread of orphanages in the late nineteenth century was not a matter of chance. There were youngsters without parents. Some were still in Europe and some had simply abandoned their children.

The *History of the Jews in Cleveland* is silent about adult criminals, yet, some of the most notorious Jewish syndicate leaders grew in our neighborhoods. A whole book has been written by Harry Mesnick, a reporter for the Plain Dealer, on the so-called Cleveland Four: Tuckes, Rothkopf, Kleinman and Dalitz, all Jewish boys. These four street delinquents came into their adulthood at just the time America committed that ultimate blunder which is called Prohibition. In 1920 when Prohibition went into effect these hoodlums were just emerging out of their adolescence and they took advantage of a golden opportunity to run in

whiskey from Canada and from the Gulf. They sold it to your parents and grandparents and anybody else who was willing to buy which meant everybody else. Many found it quite exciting to deal with the speakeasys and to buy liquor illegally. Suddenly the hoodlum was no longer a hoodlum but somebody you dealt with, somebody you helped make rich. The whiskey trade was immensely rewarding and these hoodlums became rich and moved from whiskey to labor racketeering where they worked for employers and for the unions, whoever would pay them. Then they moved into the other areas of crime, particularly extortion and gambling. They went from gambling into real estate. They even bought up part of Batista's government in Cuba. They went into Las Vegas, Miami, Havana and La Costa and built the gambling centers where many of you go.

I don't say any of this in a spirit of boosterism. There is no particular virtue in the fact that we had the Cleveland Four. There were Jewish gangsters of the same ilk in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, Detroit, Minneapolis, St. Louis and Cincinnati, all the places of Jewish settlement. It would be nice to say that these were exceptions, but that's not the case. If you look at the roll of syndicate members between the first World War and the second World War, you'll find that in absolute numbers Jews appear at all levels of gangsterism in almost identical number to the Italians. Italians and Sicilian control of the syndicates is a post-World War II phenomenon.

Some of you may remember the Kefauver investigations into organized crime in the early 1950's. If you remember those investigations you remember that Jew after Jew after Jew, the Lansky's, the Lepke's and the Kleinman's were brought to the stand. The fact is that Jews were involved disproportionately in the emergence of organized crime in the United States.

These thoughts were occasioned by the publication of an interesting book, *The Rise and Fall of the American Jewish Gangster*, by Albert Fried, Professor of History at the State University of New York in Purchase. This work is particularly interesting because Fried was to put into a conceptual scheme both the rise and the fall. He forces us to confront the social pathology which existed in immigrant Jewish life and continues, to a certain degree, to exist among the second and third generations; and he tries to explain why after the second World War Jewish gangsters began to disappear as syndicate leaders. A few live on, the Dalitz's and the Lansky's, but they're old men. In this generation Jews are largely absent from the syndicate. The question is why. The answer goes back, I suppose, to the social purpose of gangsterism. It was a quick way to break out of poverty and take advantage of America. These men saw America's wealth and wanted what wealth would bring including escape from the violence of the streets. So, once they had the dollars, these gangsters would launder their money and their lives. They sent their children to private schools and to American universities and set them up in the straight community. Their lives became part of the pattern of upward mobility adopted by the ghetto community.

I say this not to exonerate these people. They were predators, jungle creatures, who committed unconscionable acts, but if we accept ourselves for what we are, contradictory and complex, if we accept the social order for what it is, full of contrasts between poverty and wealth, if we understand the role of ambition and greed, then it's not surprising that some chose this short-cut road out. It is also not surprising that once having achieved what they wanted to achieve, they tried to fit into the society they had wanted to join in the first place.

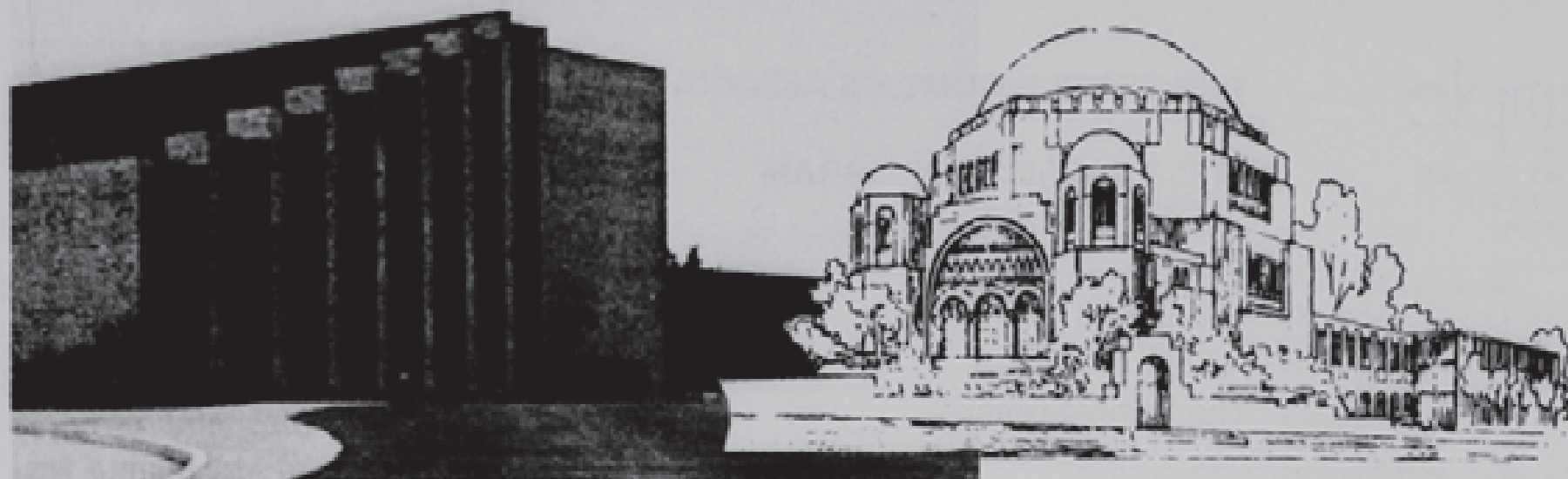
The fall of the Jewish gangster does not suggest that we no longer have feral personalities within the Jewish community. We do, not very far from here. They deal in labor racketeering, extortion, misappropriation of pension funds and the like. When the history of this generation is written there will be official histories which will list our Nobel Prize winners, our professors, rabbis, scholars, artists and musicians; and some rabbi thirty years from now will talk also of the auditor who manipulated the books, and of the salesman who sold the Brooklyn Bridge.

What's the moral of all this? There are several, I think. The first is that next time you're tempted to condemn the violence of those who are living in today's impacted and impoverished ghettos, remember that but for the grace of several generations go you. America traditionally has used its inner city neighborhoods as way stations into the larger society. Consequently these areas of first settlement have always been places of crowding, social pathology, crime and violence.

When you're tempted to condemn the blacks or the hillbillies for the crime of Cleveland remind yourself of an article written in 1907 by Theodore Bingham, the Police Commissioner of the City of New York, and published in the *American Mercury*, then one of the leading and most prestigious of the thoughtful journals. Bingham writes of the infestation of New York City by Hebrew criminals, particularly Jews of Russian descent, who have come to our shores without any sense of family or morality and who carry crime like a virus into the body politic of our fair city. The language is early twentieth century, but transpose Jews for blacks or hillbillies or Puerto Ricans and you can hear yourself or see the same animus which appears in many Letters to the Editors in the public press.

Another lesson of this history is not to romanticize the immigrant centers. A lot of exuberant nonsense has been written recently about the Lower East Side of New York. Yes, it was colorful, but it was also a slum. The world of our fathers, despite the rose-colored glasses of Irving Howe, was a cold, unhappy place whose citizens had only one wish: to get out. Our nostalgia from our grandparents' generation is more a way of putting down some middle-class attitudes which do not thrill us, than a reflex of reality. Our grandfathers worked day after day with only one thought in mind, to move to Harlem or Brooklyn. Again today the one thing that the city dweller wants is to leave Hough or Central for a little bit of grass in Cleveland Heights or Warrensville Heights.

*Daniel Jeremy Silver*



January 11, 1981  
Vol. LXVII, No. 10

# The Temple Bulletin

From the Rabbi's Desk: ABORTION: POLITICS AND PRINCIPLE  
Daniel Jeremy Silver — November 30, 1980

Until the last year or two I followed a policy not to speak publicly on the question of abortion out of a feeling that men had spoken too often on the subject. If we look back over history it becomes clear that the rules, restrictions and philosophizing about abortion has been executed exclusively by men. It seemed to me that abortion was an area in which women ought to have the major voice. They endure the surgery or carry the foetus to term. Their feelings are basic and elemental and must be considered.

I have broken this policy not because I've changed my mind about the issues but because the anti-abortion campaign has taken on aspects of a religious crusade. What should be a serious debate about a thorny public policy issue has become a frenetic crusade by true believers convinced that theirs is the only point of view which has right and truth behind it. As a rabbi I know that whenever people commit themselves to a crusade innocent people get hurt. When Christian Europe took up the sword to redeem the Church of the Holy Sepulcher from the infidel, the Jewish communities of the Rhineland which lay along their route were put to the sword. I'm afraid that many will be hurt and much unfortunate damage will be done to the body politic as the Right-to-Life crusade marches towards its fixed goal.

In January of 1973 the United States Supreme Court, in the case of *Rowe vs. Wade*, ruled that the states had no right to limit arbitrarily access to therapeutic abortion, a decision which nullified restrictive prohibitions which existed in most state codes. Rules varied from state to state, but in none were abortions readily accessible and their sudden availability unleashed a national debate on what limits, if any, ought properly to be imposed. Reasonable discussion never really got started. America was entering a period of religious revival and various groups in whose eyes abortion was legalized murder, notably the Roman Catholic Church but by no means limited to that body, undertook aggressively to reverse the court's ruling. Plans began to be drawn for a Constitutional amendment to prohibit abortion. In 1974 a single-issue political action group began to keep a voting

record of state legislators and congress-people, rating them on their stand on bills whose subject was the restriction and limitation of abortions and/or public funding of abortions. In short order, they began to compile a hit list of congress-people who they marked for defeat because these officials were opposed to the calling of a Constitutional convention or because they had voted against the Hyde Amendment which prohibited the use of Federal funds in abortion-related matters.

This Fall the hit list included Senators Church, McGovern, Bayh and Culver. These men were defeated. They were not defeated only, or even primarily, because of this list, other issues were involved, but certainly many, particularly among blue-collar voters who normally would have supported these men because of their strong pro-labor positions, cast their vote for a candidate whose economic positions may not have agreed with theirs but who had pledged to vote 'right' on the abortion issues.

The movement is implacable. At the Republican

National Convention a plank was introduced by Right-to-Life forces, and passed by the convention, which declared that all nominees to the Federal judiciary should be vetted to make sure that they were "pro-family" - a euphemism defining a pledge to vote to overrule the 1973 decision and support all measures to limit the current permissions. Never before in American history has a major party insisted that a loyalty test be imposed on nominees to the Federal bench - particularly one which required that judicial nominees oppose what the Supreme Court had declared constitutional and appropriate.

It's unlikely that President-elect Reagan will feel bound to this practice. Mr. Reagan is on record as favoring a Constitutional amendment which would prohibit abortion except when there is a direct threat to the life of the mother, but I do not have the feeling that he is an ideologue on this issue. However, many of those who formed his majority are, and there is no reasoning with them.

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## SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES

January 11, 1981

10:30 a.m.

The Temple Branch

Rabbi

DANIEL JEREMY SILVER

will speak on

A VISIT WITH OUR  
NEW PRAYER BOOK

January 18, 1981

10:30 a.m.

The Temple Branch

Rabbi

STEPHEN A. KLEIN

will speak on

THE MORAL IMPERATIVE:  
ONCE AGAIN, WITH FEELING

Friday Evening Service — 5:30 to 6:10 — The Temple Chapel  
Sabbath Service — 11:15 a.m. — The Branch



## FROM THE RABBI'S DESK

(Continued)

they are right, their position is a religious commitment, God has spoken and one must carry out His will.

What is the Jewish position on abortion? The Torah contains only one reference to the issue, and it is tangential to our modern discussion since it focuses on accidental abortion. According to the Torah if someone strikes a pregnant woman in such a way as to cause a miscarriage he must pay a heavy fine. If she dies, the assailant is indicted on a capital offense. The same rule appears in the code of Hamurappi and must be considered the conventional law of the Middle East. Surgery was suicidal and these societies could think of abortion only in terms of stillbirth and accidental or deliberate injury to the mother.

By Greco-Roman times simple surgery had become feasible. Doctors had devised chemical and surgical ways of dealing with abortion when the foetus was fully formed and near term. The Mishnah, the first great code of post-Biblical Jewish law, includes a rule that if a woman is in labor and it is feared that she may die because of a difficult delivery, "one may sever the foetus from her womb and extract it member by member because her life takes precedence." The emphasis on the last clause makes an interesting and rather subtle distinction between the value of an independent and self-sustaining being, the mother; and a still dependent being, the foetus. In the difficult business of playing God, of choosing between lives, it is the mother's life which should be saved. Given the primitive state of the medical art, the child in all probability would not survive, and the life that could be saved should be saved.

Jewish law here took a stance distinct from most regulation of other contemporary cultures. The Christian community of the time took a different position. They preferred to leave the issue in the hands of God, 'God's will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.' The Church father, Tertullian, wrote: "Prevention of birth is an act of murder, nor does it matter whether one takes a life already formed or in the process of being formed."

Given this rather sensitive beginning the Jewish tradition might have developed some subtle and rather elegant distinctions which would have given us useful categories for an abortion discussion. Similar logic might suggest that when the psyche of the mother is seriously endangered, say from a threatened mental breakdown, or when there is knowledge about the malformation or major disfigurement of the foetus, abortion should be permitted. But it didn't happen that way. The Jewish tradition remained restrictive as to psychological factors. Rabbis allowed abortion only if there was clear evidence that the woman might become insane. Jewish law does not permit, and has never permitted, abortion because of prior knowledge that the foetus may be malformed or have contracted a genetically transmitted disease or because the child is unwanted or cannot be provided for. Termination of the birth process is not deemed the mother's right.

Abortion is illegal in Israel. Israel continued the restrictive British laws of the mandate period. But

in 1952 the Attorney-General ruled that no one ought to be brought to trial on an abortion-related issue unless the case involved the loss of a mother's life. A number of hospitals and clinics in Israel perform abortions and a recent study of Israel's women revealed that one-third of all women who had been married for twenty-five years or more had had an abortion at some time during their marriage.

This brings to me what I believe to be the critical truth about the current abortion debate. Whatever position we take on the theoretical issue, abortion will not go away. In each of the ten years before the 1973 Supreme Court decision it has been estimated that 400,000 illegal abortions took place in the United States, about half the number of abortions that took place once abortion became legal. I am certain that if an anti-abortion amendment is passed or some other means is devised to prohibit the operation, it will continue to be performed in great numbers. The broken bloody hanger is still a meaningful symbol in this debate. If we make abortion illegal we simply turn abortion over to the surgical butchers, place a family in danger of blackmail; and deny women the psychological and social supports which are now offered. Prohibition turned millions of citizens into criminals and such an amendment would simply drive the surgery underground.

The anti-abortion forces are led by those who acknowledge few limits in their zeal. Over forty abortion clinics have been torched over the last three years. Almost none of the arsonists have been caught and prosecuted. About two and a half years ago a man walked into a clinic on Chester Avenue just a block from the Main Temple, poured kerosene on the floor, lit the oil and walked out quite calmly. He was seen. Many in the clinic said they could identify him, but somehow he was never apprehended and charged.

The Right-to-Life movement has successfully pressured various State legislatures and the Congress to add riders to appropriation bills which prohibit the expenditure of tax monies for abortions. On the Federal level it is illegal for foreign aid monies to be used for these purposes, no one engaged in federally funded legal aid work may give advice in an abortion-related issue; no member of the Peace Corps or of the Defense establishment may use government medical facilities for such a purpose. Finally, the Hyde Amendment prohibits the government from spending Federal money to provide abortions through welfare programs.

Some 300,000 welfare case abortions were funded federally last year. The Hyde Amendment cut off this funding source and this Fall, by a 5 to 4 vote, the Supreme Court ruled that the Congress had the right to act in this manner. I confess I find it hard to consider that the anti-abortion people have achieved a splendid victory. They have managed the ultimate in dual standard legislation: those who can afford an abortion have access to a safe abortion; those who cannot afford the operation are back to the coat hanger.

I would add that many carry about a stereotype about who asks for an abortion. We think of the candidates as sixteen-year olds who have been giddy or silly. About forty percent of the women who come to the abortion clinics are married and

mothers. They already have two or more children and simply cannot bear the emotional or financial cost of another child.

Another stereotype is that the anti-abortion campaign is a Roman Catholic issue. The Church under this new Pope has vigorously reasserted its position that abortion is murder under any conditions. To interfere with the growth of the embryo from the moment of conception is foeticide. But the Right-to-Life movement in the United States includes many others besides Roman Catholic. The anti-abortion legislation enacted in Akron about three years ago, a bill which became a model for many cities, was conceived and promoted by a young orthodox Jew who with a traditional *yiddishe kopf* said 'why fight city hall'. Let's accept the idea that abortions are legal, but let's make it impossible by procedural means for an abortion ever to take place.' So Akron passed a municipal ordinance which called for almost daily medical reviews of existing clinic facilities; all kinds of interventions by social workers, psychologists, educators and ministers; and affidavits signed by the husband or putative father. So many steps were required before an actual operation could take place that in fact the operation became unavailable.

Concerning the Roman Catholic position, it should be noted that only in 1869 did the Church finally take an absolutist position. Aristotle had argued that what he called animation, which is the term he used to describe the moment when the soul enters the embryo and the embryo became a distinct living thing, occurs forty days after conception. A number of Church fathers had agreed with the pagan philosopher and argued that ensoulment, that is the right of an embryo to receive the sacraments, particularly the last rites, occurred at forty days. This would mean that abortion during the first forty-day period would not be murder. But in the nineteenth century, a Church which felt itself besieged by modern secularism, set out to close off debate, and by a papal bull in 1869 closed the forty-day option and since then any interference with the embryo is considered as murder.

The Right-to-Life committees represent a broad social movement which has increasingly allied itself with another political grouping, the Far Right. Both seek to resurrect an older, more family-centered, more "moral" way of life than the one which exists now in America and which they fear and despise. The chairwoman of Right-to-Life movement said recently that their program is "to reimpose Judeo-Christian ethics on the United States." Her mission is to take America by the shoulders and force us to live by her definition of traditional values. The problem is that many of us respectfully disagree with her list of traditional values and violently disagree with her enforcement policies.

The anti-abortionists make two points. They argue that abortion is murder, and in a sense, it is. Any taking of life can be considered as murder. But medical research and the technological miracles of our day are forcing us to make increasingly sophisticated distinctions in defining life. We can keep the heart and lungs pumping artificially for decades. We have come to recognize an inevitable

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## FROM THE RABBI'S DESK

(Continued)

condition called brain death and doctors generally do not hook up organ-sustaining equipment when somebody is brain dead. Just as we must make some rather sophisticated distinctions in the border areas between life and death, so we must make some elegant distinctions in the border areas between conception and birth. Some argue that we ought to define life in terms of sustainable independent existence. A baby is alive only after delivery or from the time a Caesarean section delivery would be possible. Others argue that we ought to say that conscious life begins at the end of the first trimester or the second trimester. Whatever position we take moves us away from an absolutist definition which relates murder to any interference after the moment of conception.

Why must we make such distinctions? Because good sense requires that we do. In an already overcrowded world why should a family whose finances are already stretched to the limit to provide for existing children be forced to bring into the world a thalidomide child or a mongoloid and care for that child, in the process destroying the opportunity of the other children and perhaps distorting every important family relationship. Some say, but to take this life is to play God. I would answer, 'sophisticated medical care is also a way of playing God.' A generation ago such a child would not have survived.

The second argument the Right-to-Life people make takes the form of the domino theory. They argue that if we allow abortion to take place it will not be long before society accepts not only abortion but the elimination of all who are incontinent or senile. Holding the line on abortion is held to be one of the protections devised by a healthy society to protect the sanctity of human life. Whenever I've watched a Right-to-Life apologist make the usual slide presentation of their case they invariably end up with a slide or two showing corpses piled up in Dachau. The pitch is that this is the future of a society which becomes callous to human life.

What is not said is that Germany in the 1920's had the strictest anti-abortion legislation in all of Europe; and Sweden had perhaps the most flexible. History does not show that there is an inevitable progress from loose rules in the area of abortion to insensitivity to the aged or other forms of human need. One of the anomalies of the present situation is that many who align themselves with the Right-to-Life movement are those who have consistently opposed Aid to Dependent Children, Public Welfare, Medicare, and almost every piece of humane social legislation which has allowed so many to escape from the shackles of poverty.

Abortion is a complex issue. I do not look upon abortion as a positive good. I look upon abortion as I look upon oil spills. We need energy. There will be accidents and when these occur the spill must be cleaned up as fast as possible so that there's not a great deal of ecological damage. Abortions are always unfortunate, but a deformed child or an emotionally deprived child is a preventable disaster.

I'm troubled when a woman makes a decision to

abort a child simply for her convenience. Abortion ought never to be looked upon as a means of birth control. But for me the bottom line is that in an age of overpopulation, safe surgery and fertility pills strict taboos on abortion are archaic and the consequences of prohibition are extremely dangerous. Coercion didn't work during Prohibition and it will not work if an anti-abortion amendment becomes the law of the land. The issue of abortion is one in which people of moral sensitivity come down on both sides and a pluralistic society must leave room not only for honest differences of opinion but for the acts consequent on those differences. When there are serious and reasonable differences of opinion legal coercion simply won't work.

If an anti-abortion amendment becomes the law of the land tens of thousands of women, your daughters and grand-daughters, will be forced to go to Canada or have an abortion done illegally. Those with resources will be able to do so with a fair degree of safety. The poor will not be so lucky and many will be butchered. Instead of adding to the sum total of the nation's respect for life, the prohibition of abortion will add to the sum total of human anxiety and unhappiness; some will lose their lives and many will lose their youth and their emotional balance.

Those concerned with family stability, the moral disciplines, and the sanctity of human life would be better advised to put their efforts into stabilizing their lives, marriages and family than into a political campaign to force others to abide by their rules. Anita Bryant should be a symbol to all of us. An old rabbinic maxim is pertinent: "First sanctify yourself and only then sanctify others." In a pluralistic society morality begins at home and moral coercion must be opposed. When you deal with something which is not a crime, which impacts on no one in the society at large, society really has no right to intrude except to see that proper and safe medical, psychological and social standards are maintained.

Though I'm not a prophet, I believe that there is a good chance that an anti-abortion amendment will become the law of the land. Right-to-Life forces are strong and in full cry. Though every poll has shown that a majority of the American people favor the availability of abortion, a determined and implacable group can impose its will on the legislative process. Why? Because they play hard ball and we play by reasonable rules. We do not organize our lives into cells. We do tell Congress-people that if they vote contrary to our wishes we will vote against them in the next election whatever else they stand for.

The right will need some victories in the next year or two, and here is one victory which I suspect Congress will feel that it can give them without too much cost. Congress will be wrong. Prohibition established the underworld as a major force in our society. Gangsters became essential to the straight society. It took ten years before sufficient force coalesced to repeal the Eighteenth Amendment, and by then the damage had been done and the cancer of organized crime had become established in our national life.

If an anti-abortion amendment becomes the law of the land many will be hurt. Some will die and

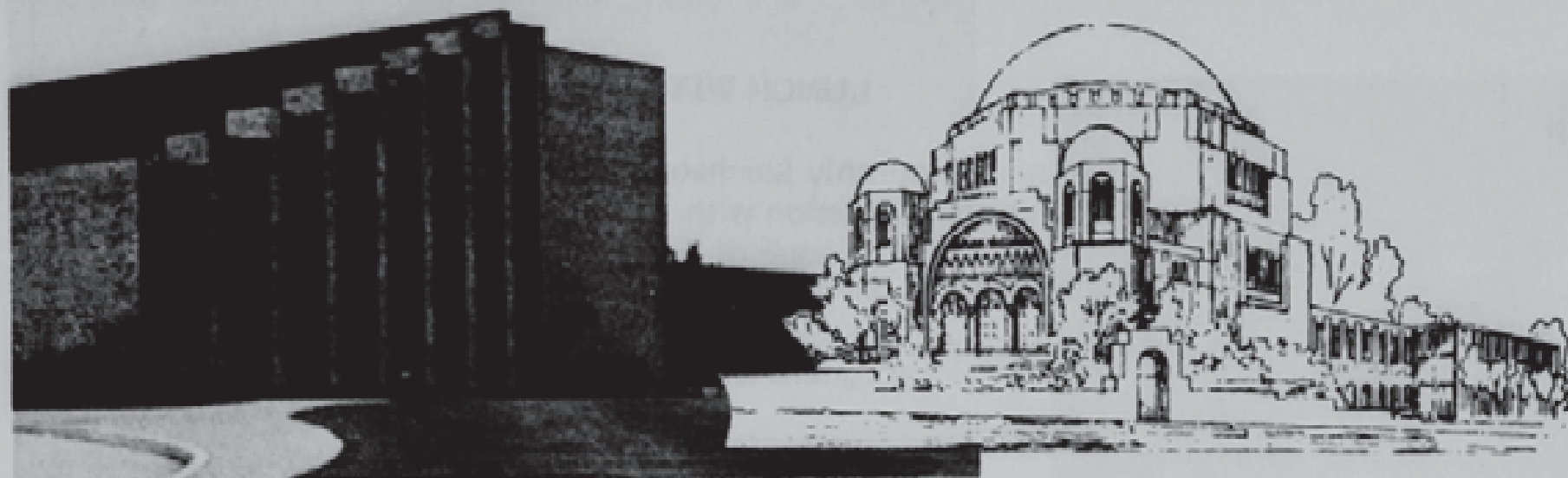
little will be achieved. Laws will not stop abortions. Laws can only declare the surgery illegal.

How does reason deal with unreason? We have to bestir ourselves unreasonably and become an effective counter force. Mr. Vanik, whose views coincide with many of ours on other issues, took an anti-abortion position during these last two years. Most of us, when we saw him, didn't bother to complain; we went along as if he was still on our side because we know the whole range of his issues and concerns. This is a luxury we can no longer afford; yet, saying that I'm conscious of the dangers of single-issue politics. Unfortunately, unreasonable people force the reasonable to play politics their way.

The abortion decision is one which a husband and a wife or a woman must take with prayerful concern, and society must respect their decision, whatever it is. In this case I stand outside of the mainstream of the halachic development of the Jewish tradition, but it seems to me that conditions have altered radically. Surgery is safe. Families are nuclear. We've encouraged a heavily sensual environment. We face overpopulation, not the danger of underpopulation. Accept abortion as a fact of life, but recognize that it is in the strengthening of the marriage and the family on the one hand, and in the use of birth control devices on the other that the ultimate solution to this thorny problem rests.

*Daniel Jeremy Silver*





October 25, 1981  
Vol. LXVIII, No. 4

# The Temple Bulletin

## From the Rabbi's Desk: YOM KIPPUR SERMON

The sermon of October 7, 1981 is produced here in response to numerous requests.

When we are deeply distressed or pushed beyond our limits, when the situation seems beyond our control or we desperately want a particular resolution to a problem, it's natural for us to make a vow. We promise God or we promise ourselves that if only our soldier will come home safely from the wars, if only our child will be born healthy, if only our love will be requited, if only our mistake will be overlooked, if only the bad patch our business is going through can be gotten through, then we will give something that's important to us — our time or our substance — to God or to a good cause.

The Hebrew word for such a vow is *neder*. Because making such vows is an instinctive response to those situations where we are driven beyond the limits of our controls, they are often described in literature. The first such vow which our Scripture details involved Jacob. Jacob, you will recall, was the younger of twins. When his father was aged and blind, Jacob deluded Isaac and defrauded his brother of the birthright. He had to flee the understandable anger of Esau and he spent the first night of his flight in the wilderness, exposed to the elements, wild animals, bandits, a stray. The Torah tells us that when he woke up the next morning Jacob made a vow to God: "If only you will remain with me, protect me on my journey, if you will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear, and if I return safely to my father's house then you shall be my God. This stone, which I have set up a pillar, shall be God's house and a tenth of all that God will give me I will surely give to Him."

Today we do not make vows with the same formal solemnity as our fathers. We do not treat them as sacred. The ancients invested their faith in the promise of God. If they attended the shrine and obeyed His will, He would protect the land, cause the rains to come, allow them a good harvest and ultimately send them the deliverance, the messiah, for whom they longed.

God however would not want to keep His word if they failed to keep theirs. There needed to be a quid pro quo: their vows to God had to be paid up for God to make good on His promises. The vows, the resolutions, we make each December 31 are more often than not neglected or broken by the end of the first month of the new year; but it was not always so. When the ancients made a vow to God it was solemnly and ceremoniously made and it had to be repaid. In the book of Deuteronomy we find an instruction from God which reflects the spirit of that age. "When you shall vow a vow to God, you shall not put off fulfilling it; for God will require it of you, and you will have acquired guilt." This paragraph is typical of that time. But then the Torah adds a peculiar and special Judaic element. "It shall not be accounted to you as a sin if you neglect making a vow." The sanctity of vows was assumed, but almost from the beginning of Jewish self-con-

sciousness, our tradition discouraged the practice. Our leaders were concerned that when we are pushed or desperate we cease to speak rationally and make promises whose consequences we have not fully considered. It's our hearts, our need, rather than our mind and our reason which speaks, and we can make extravagant promises.

The Bible contains perhaps the most tragic, certainly the most dramatic, of all episodes which illustrate the danger of making vows. In the twelfth century B.C.E. the Ammonites attacked the tribes. The Israelites turned to a seasoned commander, Jephthah, and asked him to command the defense of the land. Jephthah agreed. It was the custom in those days for a commander to make a vow to God or to his gods before he led his troops into battle; and Jephthah followed that custom. The Book of Judges reports his words:

(Continued inside)

## SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES

October 25, 1981

10:30 a.m.

The Temple Branch

Rabbi

DANIEL JEREMY SILVER

will speak on

AWACS AND ARMS SALES

November 1, 1981

10:30 a.m.

The Temple Branch

Rabbi

DANIEL JEREMY SILVER

will speak on

THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET

Friday Evening Service — 5:30 - 6:10 — The Temple Chapel

Sabbath Service — 11:15 a.m. — The Branch

## FROM THE RABBI'S DESK (Continued)

"I vow that if God gives me victory over the Ammonites and I return safe to my home the first thing that crosses the door of my house upon my safe return shall be a burnt offering unto God." The battle began. The armies of Israel were victorious. When Jephthah returned home the first thing that crossed the threshold of his house was his only child, a young daughter, who had heard the jingling of the harness as her father approached and ran out, excitedly, to meet him. The vow was paid.

Many vows are made without our being conscious of what the price may be. I remember a colleague who told me of a youngster, an adolescent, whose father became deathly ill. As he paced the corridors of the hospital, praying that the doctors might be able to return his father to health, he silently made a promise to God that if his father was cured he would devote his life to medicine. The father regained his health. The young man went to school each day, desperate to make good grades. He worked for one end to fulfill his vow, but he was only an average student and was not admitted to medical school. In the event he suffered a serious nervous breakdown.

Our tradition has tried to protect us from our more desperate acts. Rabbi Meir, an important Palestinian sage of the second century, is reported by the Talmud as saying: "Better for a man never to have vowed at all." Samuel, one of the famous rabbis of Babylon, taught: "Even if a man fulfills his vow he is to be considered as a sinner." A major tractate of the Talmud, that master work of rabbinic jurisprudence, is called *Nedarim*, Vows. As you leaf through it you discover that the central purpose of the book is to find legalistic ways, insofar as they can be found, to free men and women from the rash and excessive vows which they may have made. The rabbis could not ex cathedra exonerate everyone from their vows. They had to follow the Torah and the Torah mandated that if a vow was made it must be fulfilled. But they tried to disqualify a whole series of promises as non-vows. If vows were made by minors or by people who could not be expected to know the consequences of what they said, they were declared to be null and void. Vows had to have a certain form. The rabbis developed a formula which is called *hatarat nedarim*, a formula for the release of vows, which in many cases could be used to excuse those who were trapped in the desperate and exclusive words they had spoken.

The rabbis worked in this fashion for a number of good reasons. The first was theological. When all is said and done most of the vows that we make to God are little more than attempts to bribe God. They are our way of telling God: You do this for me, I will do this for you. This attitude goes back to the oriental practice of *bakshash*. You never appeared before the sheik or the sultan without a contribution in hand in order to make sure that he would be well disposed toward you. Now God's

ways may be inscrutable, but certainly it is to demean God to assume that His attention, His blessing, can be bought.

Then, too, vows rashly made could have painful and destructive consequences. Even today when we no longer feel the overlay of solemnity and sacredness which the ancients associated with their vows, we can still be caught up in a stubborn pride which causes us to hold fast to words spoken in anger or in desperation, even though they cause us and others great hurt. Many a parent has come to me who has spoken angrily and threatened a child that if they don't break off a certain relationship, or stop acting as they are, they should never again darken their doorsteps. The words were spoken. The child had left. The parent waits hoping against hope for the phone to ring or the car to return, but there is only silence. Often, because of our vows, we have to eat humble pie, and there are many among us who are too proud and unbending to do so even though we desperately want to bind again the ties of family and of love.

I speak of vows and of the traditional Jewish attitude towards *nedarim* because, as you recognize, this service is called Kol Nidre, "All Vows." The beautiful and moving melody which begins the service is called "All Vows." It would be logical to assume that this overture extolls the value of abiding the vows, that we will make during the Day of Atonement. After all, Yom Kippur is a day devoted to atonement, repentance, and contribution. Nothing would be more natural than that Yom Kippur's opening theme underline the sanctity of vows and the importance of fulfilling this day. Not so. Far from encouraging to fulfill our vows, the Kol Nidre is in fact a formula for the release of vows. Paradoxically, at the very beginning of our service, we ask God to release us of any and all resolutions and the vows which we will make during this Day of Atonement.

Why so?

The Kol Nidre is a legal formula which uses the repetitive language so typical of law, to make its statement. In its original form it read: "All the vows, bonds, oaths, obligations which I undertook between last Yom Kippur and this Yom Kippur I declare not to be binding. Jews began to use this form of release of vows at a time when it was literally believed that during the Ten Days of Repentance each person was actually judged by a heavenly court. Rosh Hashanah was the day the court met. Yom Kippur was the day when the sentence was pronounced and the judgment was sealed. Apparently, no one wanted to go into the climactic session on Yom Kippur when they would make their final appeal to God for mercy, owing God one, to use the vernacular, not having paid God a debt which was owed to Him. They spoke this formula of release so that they might begin this day free of the guilt of not having paid to God what they had promised to God and so have a chance to be judged worthy of another year of life and of promise.

The custom of beginning the Yom Kippur service with this formula of release began about a thousand years ago. The Kol Nidre was not written in the great academies of the Geonim. Indeed, the religious leaders of the day opposed the practice which began among ordinary people but the people had their way and it became customary to speak the Kol Nidre just before the Yom Kippur service began. The Kol Nidre served their spiritual needs and over the centuries its popularity was enhanced as it was set to great music and associated with the themes of martyrdom and loyalty. In various places and at various times Jews who lived under the Imperial Church or the Imperial Mosque and who had been forced to convert under the threat of life or exile seem to have used the Kol Nidre in their clandestine worship on the holiest day of the year, to speak its formula, free them from the guilt of their forced apostasy and make them feel that they were truly Jews. They would come together surreptitiously, secretly, for a service on Yom Kippur and recite this formula of release and so say to themselves, we are still Jews and we want to be part of the Jewish people.

Early in the twelfth century a learned and influential rabbi, Rabbenu Tam, who was concerned that the Kol Nidre formula was far too broad — it released Jews from all vows when in point of fact there was no way that this could be done within the rabbinic frame of reference — changed the language of the Kol Nidre into the language which we now use. Originally the text had been a formula of release from all the vows, bonds, oaths, promises made between last Yom Kippur and this Yom Kippur. Rabbenu Tam's wording, the wording of the present prayerbook, is a formula of release from all the vows, bonds, oaths and obligations which we will make between this Yom Kippur and next Yom Kippur. Which is to say that we declare all the resolutions which we make tonight not binding even before we make them.

Why then Yom Kippur? Isn't Yom Kippur a time to make character-improvement vows? What is the service trying to teach us by absolving us of our resolutions even before we make them?

The Kol Nidre teaches two lessons. In the first instance the Kol Nidre says to us: don't make vows. Why not? Vow-making is a discouraging enterprise. Many vows are too heavy for us. We can't live up to them. They will discourage us and ultimately stand in the way of our spiritual and moral growth. Most of our vows are 'never again' vows. As we sit here during the long hours of Yom Kippur, listen to the music, speak the confession, and feel the power, of the day, we think back over the year and linger over a particular incident. We recognize how our anger created distance between us and those we love the most. We spoke before we thought. Bitter words crossed our lips. If we had taken the time we would have expressed ourselves otherwise and the ties of family and of friendship might not have ruptured. We focus on an incident and

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## FROM THE RABBI'S DESK (Continued)

a concern and say to ourselves: 'never again'; but there are a few emotional disciplines which any of us can with certainty promise never again to violate. However long we bridle our tongue, there will come a moment when feeling wells up, when the old way gets the better of us and the words spill out. Those who are by instinct physical cannot always restrain themselves from lashing out. Those whose thoughts are self-centered will not always be courteous. Those who are by nature ambitious cannot always suppress their drive. Those who are lethargic cannot always be decisive. There are times when we can and do adopt a discipline and never again fall from grace; but far more frequently, 'never again' promises are too much for us.

The problem is that when we vow never again and fail and make another 'never again' vow and fail again, ultimately we become discouraged and cease trying. We can see this in the little things, the things that are really too trivial for Yom Kippur, but which, in a sense, become the metaphor for the more serious concerns of this day. We've tried to give up smoking or drinking or eating too much. We say, 'never again'. Six months later we begin again. We promise ourselves, 'never again', and three months later we fall from grace. Ultimately, we cease making the promise at all. It's too discouraging. Our repeated failures force us to admit what we don't want to admit - our weakness and inconstancy. The thrust of Yom Kippur is to make improvement possible, not to suppress that which is human in us. Man is not by nature angelic and cannot live angelically. Yom Kippur speaks of growth, of taking the next step. Yom Kippur teaches that one *mitzva*<sup>1</sup> leads to another. It does not ask us to become instant saints. In point of fact there are no saints. Yom Kippur does not encourage us to make resolutions which in all likelihood are beyond our ability to abide. Think tonight about doing your best, about living up to your highest aspiration, but don't vow what you cannot abide.

The Kol Nidre to stand at the beginning of our service for another reason: to remind us not to focus the concerns of these twenty-four hours too narrowly. Over Yom Kippur everyone of us who gets caught up in the service reviews his life. Each of us has some special concern. Some of us can't pull ourselves together. We're unable to make up our minds and so we spend these twenty-four hours thinking about being indecisive, screwing up our courage to go out and make the decisions which ought to be made. But you know, plugging the one hole in the dam through which

water is trickling is a useless enterprise if the whole dam face is weak and in danger of disintegrating.

In point of fact, most of the specific incidents on which we dwell and most of the specific character flaws that concern us tonight cannot be overcome unless we change the whole context of our lives. I had a mother come to me some months ago, complaining that she often spoke intemperately to her children. She always regretted it. She said: "They get under my skin, I can't stop myself, I know I shouldn't do it, I say too much and immediately regret what I say, but I do it anyway. How can I overcome this tendency to let go on my children?" We began to talk and as we talked we discovered, she and I, that as an only child, she has always gotten her way with temper tantrums. Temper was an emotion whose practical value she had been conditioned to accept. We discovered that she had not developed other interests outside of her children so they meant everything to her. She had no other release and when the least thing went wrong there was nothing to balance out her emotional concerns. We discovered that she was inordinately concerned about her marriage. There was nothing fundamentally wrong with it, but so many of her friends were having trouble, were being divorced, and she was afraid that if she failed in her major role as a mother her husband might turn away. We discovered that she had a very difficult relationship with her mother. She never had been able to say to her mother what she felt, and so she said to her children what she really meant to say to her mother. And on and on and on.

I'm suggesting through this one instance that if we concentrate only on a particular incident, or do what we normally do on Yom Kippur, dwell on the failing which has caused us the greatest pain, we'll fail to tap Yom Kippur's real potential. Yom Kippur's purpose is not to help us devise a technique to deal with a particular failing or a single addiction. Yom Kippur's goal is to help us reposition our whole lives, to make us look hard at all aspects of our character, to make us consider whether we are making it possible for the divine potential within us to unfold.

Have you ever noticed how the *Vidui*, the confession, is written? Each line of the confessional is specific. The *Vidui* lists a whole alphabet of sins and failings of which all of us are in some way guilty. For the sins which we have sinned against Thee by abuse of power, by the profanation of Thy name, by speaking disrespectfully to parents and teachers, by taking advantage of others and on and on and on, a whole litany of sins. There is similar definition of repentance in the liturgy. When it comes to the other side of the equation,

what it is that we are to become, the words are general: to purify our hearts that we can worship Thee in truth; to align ourselves again to God, to do the good. The goal of *teshuvah*, repentance, the goal of Yom Kippur, is not to improve a single aspect of our lives or to resolve a single problem but to reposition our whole life. The goal of Yom Kippur is not to encourage you to make a vow feeling that once you overcome a single failing it will never happen again. Character doesn't develop that way. The goal of Yom Kippur is to make you see your own nobility, the fullness of your possibility, that bit of God which is within you and how, by taking a step here, showing concern there, offering yourself to another to love, by setting higher goals for yourself, by being more disciplined all the way across the board and, most of all, by having a nobler and more divine perspective of what your life may be, by obeying God's Instructions, you'll be able to restructure your life during the next year so that the failings which are so burdensome to you now, the memories about which you are unhappiest about tonight and will think about tomorrow, will not recur - not because you have gone after them directly, made a 'never again' vow, but because you've seen yourself as God sees you, as a sinner, as one who could do better, as someone created in His own image. We speak of sin. Sin is the measure of the difference between what you are and what you might be; of what you are and what you can still be. It's a measure of your spiritual and moral potential.

Tonight it's not the vow that we seek, it's the tear, a tear for the person we might have been, can yet be, if only the spirit of Yom Kippur can envelope us, if we'll only look at the whole pattern and direction of our life. Forget the specific vows. Forget the resolutions. Concentrate on the whole - on the direction and purpose of your life. Understand the reason for the Kol Nidre.

It is said that on a particular *erev* Yom Kippur the great Hasidic master, Levi Yitzhak of Berditchev, stood outside his door early in the afternoon preparing himself spiritually for the Yom Kippur service. A tailor passed along the street looking for some business. "Have you anything to mend?" "Anything to mend?" Levi Yitzhak began to cry. A disciple who was standing nearby was puzzled. "My master, why are you crying?" "My soul needs mending and there is no one who can do it for me." That's the concern that all of us face during these next hours. Can we mend our soul? Can we recover the wholeness of our persons? Can we turn to the way that will enlarge the possibility the new year offers to us? No resolutions. A tear. No vows, but clearer understanding. No resolutions but a whole-hearted return.

*Daniel Jeremy Silver*



December 6, 1981  
Vol. LXVII, No. 7

# The Temple Bulletin

From the Rabbi's Desk: THE RELIGIOUS PROBLEM IN ISRAEL AND AMERICA  
The sermon of November 7, 1981 is produced here in response to numerous requests.

In the last several years, a new phrase has appeared in the vocabulary of Jewish life, the label Torah True. Torah means instruction. More specifically Torah designates God's instructions to Israel. We use Torah as a shorthand word to describe the mandates and commandments of Jewish life. Over the centuries each generation has understood Torah to be the God defined form of Jewish life as it was known in their day. An ancient piety encouraged them to ascribe all that they called Torah to a single occasion: Moses' receiving God's instruction on Mount Sinai.

A few years ago, some within the traditional community began to call themselves Torah True. They used the label to separate themselves from all others from us; and to suggest that everyone else had fallen away from the true way. They alone had remained faithful. They were the true Israel and we were the faithless. The label was based on a criteria of observance. A good Jew was a Jew who followed the traditional rabbinic forms. They deny that any other kind of Jew can be a good Jew and given their perspective and concerns many forgot that the form of Jewish life has never been the full measure of devotion. An unhappy truth about the Torah True is that an inordinate number of them have been involved in currency scandals and the misappropriation of government funds in Israel while in United States a number have been involved in nursing home scandals and the like.

I hasten to add that the Torah True do not represent the entirety or even a majority of those who are Orthodox. Some months ago the quarterly *Judaism* published an autobiographical piece by a former Chief Rabbi of Johannesburg. This pious and learned man had been on the train from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. A young Torah Truenik had sat down next to him and they had talked of matters Talmudic. As he got off the train he went to put on his hat and, accidentally, knocked his head covering off. He took a few steps to pick up the hat. The young Torah Truenik began to berate him for having violated the law. There is a rule in the depths of the tradition that no one should take more than four steps bareheaded. But there is also the rule to respect age and learning. This was *chutzpah*. Youth berating age. Ignorance berating learning. There was more to the story. The Torah Truenik and the rabbi got on a city bus. The young man's seat was directly under a no-smoking

sign, but without a second thought he lit a cigarette. The rabbi couldn't avoid saying, "Nu?" The answer came quick, "What's that to do with us." Many of the Torah True are as contemptuous of the rules of a Jewish state as they would be of the rules of a non-Jewish society. The only rule which they recognize is the four ells of the halacha and they tend to pay attention only to the formal elements of that tradition.

Many learned Orthodox scholars and rabbis would agree with many of the structures which I will speak this morning — though obviously not with the point of view from which I speak. Why then are Torah True worth our time and concern? Because they have become a political force in Israel. There they affect many areas of private life and there they have become a major factor among those who seek to limit Israel's options in the West Bank which they regard as God-given and therefore non-negotiable. Further some of their actions in Israel encroach on Jewish life outside of Israel.

Because of the peculiarities of the Israeli coalition system of Government, the Torah True, although a small minority of the population, have been able to make the government policy adopt many parts of their program. Their way impacts on everyone's life.

Perhaps the best way to introduce this problem to you is to read a few brief paragraphs by a fine Orthodox Jewish scholar, a former rabbi of Montreal, David Hartman. Hartman retired from his pulpit some years ago and is now a professor of philosophy at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. He wrote this piece during the frenetic negotiations after the last election when the religious parties were in the position of holding the balance of power and so gained an inordinate voice in the formation of Begin's coalition cabinet.

"During the past few weeks, Israeli society has witnessed a secretive and sinister attempt by certain political forces in Israel to form a government that would allegedly further religious interests and values.

"Undoubtedly, the major political parties, which are predominantly secular in spirit, have always made arrangements with so-called religious groups in order to further their own secular goals and aspirations.

"Nonetheless, because of the current behaviour of the rabbinate and other political power groups, the majority of Israelis are more convinced than ever that Judaism in Israel is an instrument with which

(Continued inside)

## SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES

December 6, 1981  
10:30 a.m.  
The Temple Branch

Rabbi  
DANIEL JEREMY SILVER  
will speak on  
EDUCATION FOR WHAT

December 13, 1981  
10:30 a.m.  
The Temple Branch

Rabbi  
DANIEL JEREMY SILVER  
will speak on  
THE MYSTERY OF THE ARK

Dedication of Ricky Lewine  
Memorial Ark

Friday Evening Service — 5:30 - 6:10 p.m. — The Temple Chapel  
Sabbath Service — 11:15 a.m. — The Branch



## FROM THE RABBI'S DESK (Continued)

to strike backroom political deals rather than a prophetic call to intense love of God and moral integrity.

"Judaism has thus been disgraced in the eyes of the community by its so-called religious leadership. Instead of bringing the message of Judaism free and openly into the market place of Jewish life, it has turned Torah into an object of political agreements between ministers in the Israeli government and so-called religious sectors of the community, who believed that love for Torah demands detachment from community.

"Whereas the Torah teaches us that the greatest commandment is study and reflection and that only through learning can one develop love of God, our government believes that through political pressure we will bring Judaism to the Jewish people.

"There is a feeling of shame among people genuinely committed to Judaism. They are embarrassed by the way Judaism has been vulgarized and exploited by political pressure groups. The secular forces in Israel must be gloating with joy at the triumph of secularism in Israel.

"Thanks to the coalition discussions and agreements, another great wall has been established between God's word and the people of Israel. Once again the name of God has been disgraced in the public marketplaces of Jewish life.

"The way we have dealt with the problem of conversion illustrates this ugly process..."

I will speak of the conversion issue shortly. I want first to make it clear that this talk is not a gratuitous attack by a reform rabbi on Orthodox Judaism and that I raise a concern being expressed by many across the spectrum of Jewish life about a group who emphasize custom and form at the expense of the moral and spiritual reach of our tradition, who are willing and eager to use political power to effect their narrow ends, and whose actions are causing bitter and unnecessary divisions within the Jewish community.

Let me give you some background. When Israel came into being in 1948 the Labor Party had a clear majority of seats in the *Knesset*. Nevertheless Ben Gurion and his party decided to bring the religious Zionist parties into a coalition. There is a Jewish principle called *Shalom Bayit*, do everything you can to keep peace in the house. At the time the Labor Party, made up largely of secular socialists, also agreed that the practice in matters of personal status should be kept as it had been under the Mandate and for centuries before. The Middle East has long been accustomed to a form of social organization which is called the millet community. There is a national government which has the power of taxation and controls foreign and military policy. This government, however, allows the various ethnic groups under its authority to control their domestic affairs. Each "nation" governs itself by its religious law. This patchwork pattern of social and legal control has existed for centuries in the Middle East and was continued by the British when, at the end of the First World War, they took over from the Turks.

In Palestine Jews were governed by rabbinical law and rabbinical courts, Copts by their Coptic law and priests, *Cadis* and the Shariyah ruled in the Muslim community. The secular socialist majority who founded Israel allowed the rabbinate to retain the authority which they had enjoyed under the British because they didn't really know what else to do and they weren't particularly worried. They were a majority. They didn't think the religious parties would be able to extend their privileges beyond the narrow limits which were allowed them. In the Mandate era if Kibbutzniks didn't like the rabbi's ruling about their marriage, they simply lived together as common-law man and wife and that was end of the matter.

Here was a case where Ben Gurion's judgment failed him. Instead of rabbinic power gradually withering away, it grew helped along mightily by the vagueries of Israel's multi-party political system. The number of people who vote for the religious parties has remained constant, never more than 10% of the population; but the power of these small groups has grown from election to election. By the Fourth *Knesset*, the Labor Party could not form a coalition without the National Religious Party. This year Mr. Begin could not form a government without the support of the three religious parties. As their political importance grew, their demands grew apace. Israel found itself not only with a calendar which established the Sabbath as the weekly day of rest but with rules which prevent all movement by public transport on the Sabbath. Hospitals found themselves challenged on their rights to perform autopsies. Schools had to include rabbinic materials taught according to rabbinic interpretations.

As is usually the case power corrupts. The religious parties began to use power highhandedly. Their students and women were to be excused from military service. All schools must enlarge the Judaic content of their curriculum. Archeologists were not to be given site permits without the authorization of the Chief Rabbi. After the last election the religious parties won an unprecedented number of major concessions. Begin agreed that the Sabbath must be fully observed by all industry and transport. The ports must be closed on the Sabbath. El Al must not fly. Two years ago El Al lost 40 million dollars — a sum of money which a little state like Israel can ill afford. Last year the airline undertook a program of retrenchment and El Al was beginning to come out of the red and to fly on time. Because of the time changes between New York and Paris and Israel, when and if the Sabbath rule is fully enforced, El Al will have to close down two of seven days of the week. El Al cannot survive under such economic restrictions and we must remember that a national airline is not simply a source of revenue but an important military asset. If this happens it will be increasingly difficult and undesirable for tourists to visit Israel. In Israel sea and airports must be closed sufficiently early for the workers to be home for the Sabbath and remain closed sufficiently long to allow them time at the end of the Sabbath for them to get back to the port. Tourists will be unable to leave for a 48-hour period. Schedules will become cumbersome and those who have no business in Israel besides the desire to visit there for a week or so will find reasons to go elsewhere.

Mr. Begin also agreed that hospital administration is to be governed by the *halacha*; which is to say

that the rabbis will have final say in many areas in which they ought not to have any say. They will decide whether an autopsy may be permitted; whether an abortion may be performed; whether certain kinds of medical research may be undertaken. These decisions are to be left to a highly politicized rabbinate who can be counted on to be more sensitive to attacks from the Torah True on their right than sensitive to the ethical niceties of modern medicine. Great sums of money are to be used to support Israel's religious schools. Money is to be provided for the housing of married yeshivah students even if other segments of the population may not have such housing provided for them. The exemption of religious women from the military has been enlarged and there is an interesting new exemption from military service of those who are euphemistically called the "newly enlightened" — those who suddenly become observant.

Potentially the most damaging element in the agreement Begin reached with the religious parties was his promise to submit to the *Knesset*, if he can find the votes, a bill which will amend the Law of Return to limit its application to Jews who have been born of a Jewish mother or been converted to Judaism according to rabbinic form. This would mean that anyone whom I have converted, or any Reform or Conservative rabbi has converted, would be considered non-Jews under this new law — they and their children and their children and their grandchildren. You can see the confusion and division such a rule would introduce into our communities and the anger it would cause. Why should Jews in America who believe themselves to be loyal Jews be concerned about the security and safety of that state which declares them to be non-Jews? Why should they give to the United Jewish Appeal? Already there have been pressures in some of the communities to have local Federations take strong and effective political action to induce Mr. Begin not to do what he has undertaken to do. For the time being the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds has taken a hands-off stand. Understandably it wants none of the fall out of this quarrel, but ultimately if the religious parties persist there is no way such groups can escape this unwanted battle. How long will it be before the large Reform and Conservative constituencies in the United States say, and with some justice: 'why should we continue to support a government which spits in our face?'

I don't want to minimize the complexity of the synagogue-state issue. Most of us believe implicitly and simply in the separation of church and state. (We never thought we would have to face the problem of the separation of church and synagogue.) As Americans we're proud that our Constitution stipulates that Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or the free exercise thereof. We take separation for granted. But even in America, especially in America, we ought not to. Even in America, the problem remains a live issue. I give you the Moral Majority.

When the founding fathers spoke of the disestablishment of religion they probably meant only that every religious community should have the right to worship in its own way. In the colonies almost everybody was a Christian and they certainly assumed that Christian values would always be basic

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## FROM THE RABBI'S DESK (Continued)

to their community. When they spoke of disestablishment they meant the right of Methodists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists and Puritans to have their own churches. They did not mean public schools where the Lord's Prayer and Christmas pageants were not permitted.

The problem is that religion is not simply what one does two hours a week on the *Shabbat*. Religion is a cluster of ideas, institutions, laws, rituals, hopes and values by which a society sanctifies a certain set of values and defines purpose and meaning. Inevitably every religious tradition has its unique vision and special understanding of right and wrong. Inevitably every religious tradition has its own ideas about how the social order should be shaped. And, inevitably, these assumptions conflict with the hopes and plans of other religious groups. Last week a right-wing Conservative rabbi and representatives of the Council of Bishops of the Roman Catholic Church testified in Congress in favor of laws which would prohibit abortion. At the same session liberal Christian and Jewish leaders testified against the proposed constitutional amendment which would have that effect. In United States liberals fought for a century and a half before most states accepted the idea that public schools should be public schools and not Protestant schools. Many still cannot understand that Christian values, and I don't mean simply ritual practices, cannot be promulgated in the public school curriculum; vide, the crusades to return prayer to the daily schedule, creationism to physics classes and to remove sex education from the curriculum. Two days ago our papers reported that the school board in a county outside of Columbus had agreed in Federal court to abolish the practice of beginning school with fifteen minutes of devotion and of having students memorize lines from the Bible as useful mottoes in character formation.

Jews believe in separation because it is our values which are omitted and our holidays slighted; but let us recognize that everyone assumes that his religious values ought to be encouraged by the institutions of his society. Those who fight for the public school as we know it do so because its approach is congruent with their own.

The small social units of earlier societies — the clan, the family, the tribe — were religious and homogeneous and no one sensed any conflict between religion and the social unit. The Near Eastern model of the millet community also handled this problem fairly well. The government allowed every religious group enough latitude to govern its domestic relations. But around the 16th century Western man decided to create something called a nation-state and something called citizenship. Citizenship gave the individual a say he had never had before: one person, one vote; but it precluded the separate religious communities from governing themselves. There was to be only one law for all citizens. The nation structure forces people of different religious feelings to come under a single law at the same time that it gives to each person the right to have a say in how the law should be formulated. It presumes for conflict and resolution and no democratic nation has successfully solved the problem of how to adjust the difference in religious vision and values which

exist in a heterogeneous society. Given human nature many are not satisfied with the freedom to turn off their television set or not buy a book or to enroll their child in a parochial school. They want the state to control programming and curriculum their way. The evangelical crusade to reintroduce prayer into our schools is evidence of a significant movement to return the public schools to what they were fifty years ago when they were extensions of the Protestant religious schools. The problem is basic and unresolved and there are no neat solutions — only political ones and that means gains and losses — adjustments and accommodations. I can't come before you and say that if only the rabbis of Israel are deprived of their authority over the rules of private status that will resolve Israel's synagogue-state problem. That's not true. It would help, of course, but there would still be Torah-Trueniks whose needs have to be considered and there would still be the problem of the Jewishness of a Jewish state. Nor can I condemn out of hand those who have strong commitments which are different than my own. I have strong commitments also. What I can say is that the direction Begin and the Agudah have taken is unfortunate for many reasons not the least of which is that it rides roughshod over the sensibilities and rights of the majority. The Torah True raise the specter of Iran and since every strong action breeds an equal strong reaction they raise the possibility of a renaissance of militant secularism.

We should prize commitment, even those commitments which differ from our own, and misprize political coercion even when it is on behalf of ideas that we cherish. We should treat with contempt those who teach a theology of contempt and, unfortunately, much Torah True activity derives its energy from a teaching of contempt towards other Jews. Just before Rosh Hashanah this year the Agudah, one of the religious parties in Israel and the group most identified with the Torah True phenomenon, published a rabbinical diktat to the effect that no one should worship in a Conservative congregation because God doesn't hear the prayers of Conservative Jews. Shades of Reverend Smith, but it was the Council of Torah Sages not a Bible-Belt minister who spoke this nonsense. They didn't mention Reform. We aren't even considered Jews.

A word about our own attitudes. The Torah True play up the idea that non-traditional Jews live as they do because they are weak and uncaring. They play on the idea that there is only one way to be a Jew — their way; and unfortunately many of us unthinkingly accept this argument even if this opinion doesn't force us to change our ways. It's time we accept the truth that liberal Judaism is a wholly legitimate modulation of our tradition, as legitimate a modulation as rabbinic Judaism, which significantly reshaped the Biblical tradition. Yes, some Reform Jews became Reform Jews and some Conservative Jews became Conservative Jews because the many rules put unwanted limits on their lives, but many others became liberal Jews in order to revive the prophetic spirit of our past because they felt that the limited curriculum of many Yeshivot denied the modern Jew learning which a modern should master; and because they felt that the halachic norms were life restrictive rather than life enhancing in the changed

conditions of modern life. Whether they and we made the right decision or not is not the crux of the issue. The issue is that any religious tradition remains dynamic only as long as it is alive. Change has always been of the essence. Moses never knew most of the rules rabbinic Judaism affirms as essentially Jewish. Moses never met a rabbi or any persuasion. Moses never entered a synagogue. Moses never saw a Sefer Torah. If I took him to our ark and opened a Torah scroll he couldn't read it. His Hebrew was written in a different script. Moses was a Biblical Jew. Mainonides was a rabbinic Jew. Daniel Silver is a Reform Jew. And we are all good Jews. Yet on innumerable occasions I've visited with you and I've heard you say of some fine loyal member of The Temple: he was a good person, but he wasn't pious. He was pious by his standards and ours, and they are legitimate standards.

Recently we have brought into being in Cleveland a Congregational Plenum consisting of the senior rabbis and presidents of all our congregations. I'm very proud of this group which is the only group of its kind in the country and I've worked hard to give it strength. We have been able to establish it because there are Reform rabbis like myself who recognize the intellectual integrity of modern Orthodoxy and because there are Orthodox rabbis who are willing to see Daniel Silver as something other than an Epikoros. Last week we sponsored a meeting of young leaders from all the congregations. Our aim was to provide a forum which would allow religious Jews of all kinds to meet as religious Jews. During the discussion many among the young people wanted to define who is a good Jew. Implicit in that thrust was the assumption that a good Jew is my kind of Jew. I tried to say to them that only God can know whether we are good Jews or bad Jews. Whether we took the right way or the wrong way. What we must decide is what kind of Judaism fits us, whether it's a way through which we can grow, whether we are serious about the commitments we talk about.

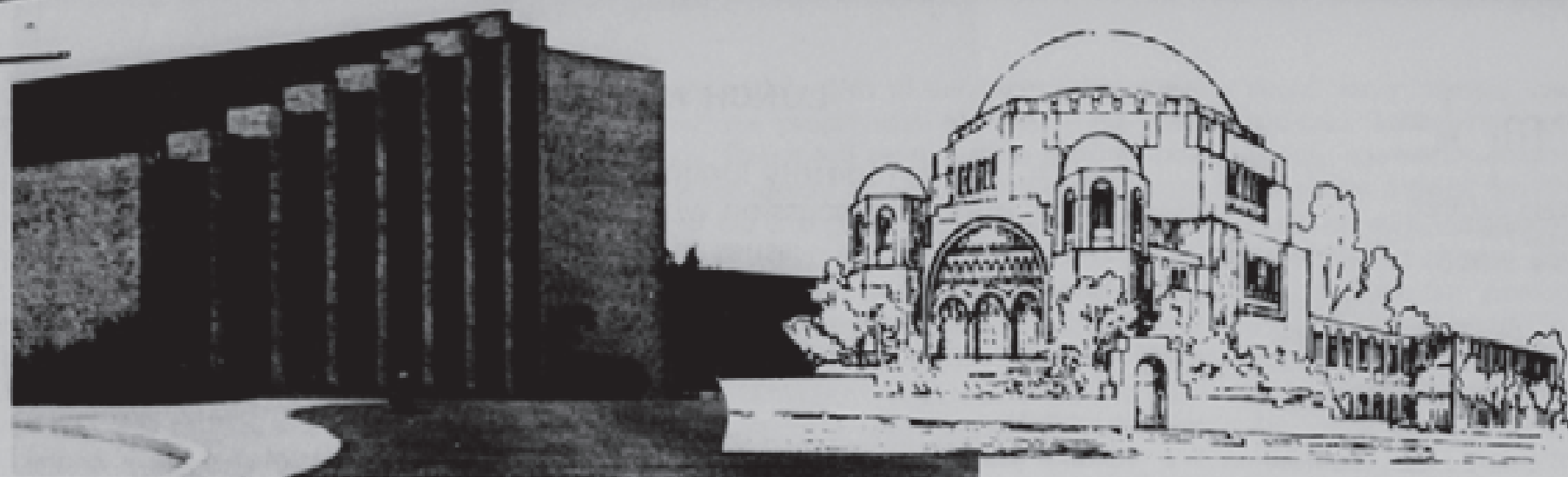
Definitions create division. That's the problem with the attempt to reformulate Law of Return in Israel. There are only twelve or thirteen million Jews in a world of four billion people. A little community like ours which is struggling to survive cannot afford the luxury of disqualifying anyone who doesn't agree with our peculiar ideas.

A final paradox and with this I close. The group in Israel which is sponsoring Torah Trueism is called the *Agudah*. The *Agudah* community developed in Eastern Europe and consists largely of Hasidic traditionalists who fought against the establishment of the state of Israel on the claim that only the Messiah was to establish the state. They still care little about the state. That's why the youngster on the bus payed no attention to a no-smoking sign. That's why their youngsters do not serve in the military and have never agreed to serve in non-military functions. What we have is an anti-Zionist group dictating policy to the state of Israel.

It shouldn't be this way.

*Daniel Jeremy Silver*





November 22, 1981  
Vol. LXVII, No. 6

# The Temple Bulletin

## From the Rabbi's Desk: THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET

The sermon of November 1, 1981 is produced here in response to numerous requests.

Just a year ago this week, Ronald Reagan was elected president of the United States. Inflation and the faltering economy were the major factors behind the massive mandate which he received that November day. The real income of most Americans was dropping under the pressure of double-digit inflation. The economy was not expanding fast enough to provide sufficient jobs for those who were just entering into the work force and for many who had been employed. Last November few Americans believed that Jimmy Carter had a game plan or the will to turn the economy around.

Shortly after he took the oath of office, President Reagan announced what he called a Proposal for Economic Recovery whose major features were budget cuts and tax cuts. The theory behind his proposal bore the strange name of supply-side economics. Its major thesis was the proposition that increasing the available sums for investment in new ventures and the retooling of American industry would allow our companies to become competitive again in world markets and to produce the goods and the jobs required by the nation. Stagflation, a coined word which meant a flat economy falling further and further behind the rate of development in the rest of the world, would be cured, the president assured us, by increasing the pool of available capital which could be done by reducing the size and cost of government and consequently the taxes required by the government.

During the early months of Mr. Reagan's administration the magazines and newspapers were filled with articles extolling the idea that the 1980's would be the decade of the re-industrialization of America. New plants, more efficient equipment, new electronic robots, more research and development would be brought on line with the aim of making our economy prosperous, competitive and expansive.

The pool of capital required to produce that happy result would be produced through tax cuts and

budget cuts. The tax cuts would be principally for the benefit of industry — more rapid depreciation allowances — and for the wealthy — lower graduated income for tax rates — on assumption that if such benefits went to the poor of the land they would spend their windfall for necessities rather than use it for investment. The inevitable result of acting on what came to be called 'Reaganomics' was the passing of tax schedules which effectively increased the wealth of the wealthy and the profits of industry and put increased burdens on the poor who would be given few tax breaks and would have to get along without many of the social programs on which they now depended. Since the president also proposed massive increases in defense spending, the cuts in social welfare supports would have to be sizeable. The other America, the 10% or 20% of Americans who even now do not fully enjoy the opportunity or the prosperity of our land, would be pushed farther away from its benefits.

Such was the size of the president's election victory that by July of this year he had on his desk legislation from the Congress agreeing to 35.2 billions of dollars in budget cuts from the last budget proposed by the Carter administration — the budget which went into effect on October 1. By the first week in August, the president's rhetoric has become the rule of the land insofar as tax cuts were concerned. He was then able to sign a bill which provided a tax cut of approximately 25% on personal incomes staggered over three years. These cuts, which were across the board, would largely benefit the rich and the corporations. Beyond this, the tax measure provided that the last budget of the present Reagan administration, the 1985 budget, would establish a level of expenditure by the government which could not be exceeded by subsequent administration. A system of indexing was passed which would limit the government to the same proportion of the Gross National Product that it would receive in taxes that year.

(Continued inside)

## SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES

November 22, 1981

10:30 a.m.

The Temple Branch

Rabbi

DANIEL JEREMY SILVER

will speak on

THE JEWS OF CLEVELAND:  
A NEW LOOK

November 29, 1981

10:30 a.m.

The Temple Branch

Rabbi

DANIEL JEREMY SILVER

will speak on

A TALE WELL TOLD

ANNUAL THANKSGIVING DAY SERVICE — November 26

Epworth Euclid United Methodist Church

9:30 a.m. Breakfast

10:30 a.m. Service

Friday Evening Service — 5:30 - 6:10 — The Temple Chapel

Sabbath Service — 11:15 a.m. — The Branch

## FROM THE RABBI'S DESK (Continued)

Most everyone is in favor of tax cuts and that since it is commonly accepted that years of pork-barreling by Congress and feather-vesting by bureaucrats has swollen Federal expenditures, it was generally agreed that there was a great deal of fat in the Federal budget and most of us felt that it was time to take a long hard look at what was being spent. The country as a whole was, I think, in agreement if not with the specifics of the 35.2 billion dollar budget cut then with the promise that it would trim the fat and leave the government more efficient and more effective. There was little argument about the need to spend our monies more wisely. When the president proposed that the cost of a number of services which only certain groups in the country used; airports by private pilots and for the use of waterways by yachtmen and bargemen should be paid for by user fees, we agreed. They benefitted from the 2 billion dollars spent, most of us did not. And we approved the attempt to force those who managed existing programs to look at their programs and to make sure that we were receiving a dollar's worth of service for every dollar of expenditure.

But the president's plans go beyond trimming the fat from government. Mr. Reagan's budget cuts and tax cuts represent proposals which go far beyond 'more bang for the buck.' A budget is both a list of costs and a statement of the political philosophy of the administration — a statement of how the goods, services, benefits, and the power of the country will be distributed. I'm not an economist nor an economic theoretician, but I do recognize every economic theory is first and foremost a political statement. A number is only an artificial symbol. Most of the numbers used in presenting economic theories are simply symbols theoreticians use to compress historic and political facts into presumably quantifiable terms. We need to get some grip on the complexities and contradictions of the social order so we force human beings and their activities into numbers. Economics is taught in the university as a social science, and economists like to think of themselves as scientists who can accurately describe and predict the ways in which society operates and how it should operate. In point of fact, the social sciences, all of them — history, sociology, economics — are art forms rather than pure sciences. That is they deal in approximations not in certainties. And the numbers which the economists love — whether they be micro-economists or macro-economists or any other kind of economists — are simply symbols which give the semblance of order to the uncertainties and the vagueries of life.

A budget presents the history and the purposes of a society and is the result of innumerable political decisions and political events so much so that most presidents have simply tried to modify a bit the policies of their predecessors. But this president apparently proposes to use these tools to effect a radical redistribution of wealth and of power. My thesis this morning is that his budget is not simply a shrinking of Federal expenditures by cutting waste and unnecessary spending, but a program of income and benefit redistribution. Historically one could say that this administration seems to be committed to a policy which is the very reverse of the policy of the New Deal and the Fair Deal which also aimed at redistribution

of power and benefits of our society, but aimed to favor the people who had less — the other America. Over a half century those policies made possible the upward mobility of our society which has been the strength of our community and the envy of the world. Mr. Reagan proposes to reverse that policy. Supply-side economics is simply another economic theory which like all economic theories, Marxian, Keynesian, Socialist, are in effect ideologies, convenient doctrines whose real purpose is to justify a redistribution of wealth and power according to preconceived political and social principles. If Mr. Reagan and his minions have their way, the wealthy will get richer, the poorer will get poorer, there will be fewer social services, the power of the corporate world will be greater and few from the lower classes will be able to rise above their station.

One can criticize supply-side economics in many ways. I wonder, for instance, whether this new pool of corporate and individual profits which presumably will come into being will, in fact, be invested in research and retooling — in positive ways. Recent experience suggests otherwise. Some energy companies which have had large windfall profits these last year have spent much of it to take over other productive companies rather than to research new forms of energy. One thinks of Conoco. One thinks of yesterday's headlines about Mobil seeking the acquisition of Marathon Oil. There is no reason to be confident, greed being what it is, that the leaders of American business will operate the ways supply-side theory assumes that they will. Then too a percentage of the American industrial establishment is owned by noncitizens. We now have the multi-national corporation. We now have major investments by citizens of key Western European and energy-rich countries in our economy, and there's obviously no guarantee that those additional profits under the new tax reduction will be reinvested in the American economy. They may simply take their money and go home.

I could go on with such criticisms, but the point I want to emphasize is that supply-side economics, Reaganomics, is based on a theory of the redistribution of wealth and power which I, at least, and I hope many of you, find unacceptable for moral as well as economic reasons. I look on Reaganomics as an attempt to entice the American people with a nostalgic dream which is no longer realizable. His Program for Economic Recovery seems to claim that we can have again that incredible level of prosperity which we enjoyed in the 1950's and early 1960's. In those years just after the second world war, the American dollar was the only currency that counted. Our industrial plant was the only truly productive economy in the world. We didn't have much competition and enjoyed an inordinate share of the world's wealth. Supply-side economics notwithstanding, those days, my friends, are gone forever. We are no longer the industrial monolith whose products dominate the market. Across the globe there are any number of countries with the will and the wit to compete with us effectively. Japan and Germany produce cars, computers and high-technology equipment equal to and sometimes superior to our products — and often cheaper. South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore are able to compete with us for major building contracts in the Near East which we once took for granted as belonging to us. Shoes, textiles and leather goods can be pro-

duced more cheaply and efficiently by other countries. Twenty years ago we dominated the armaments market — that profitable market that led to the AWACS sale — now the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, West Germany, France and England are active and efficient competitors. As the world industrialized, our prosperity which was based to a certain degree on an unrecoverable quick start, must decrease. We can't expect the kind of prosperity we enjoyed twenty-five years ago to return. Any administration who promises us otherwise misleads us.

And don't forget 1973 — the oil shock. Oil which had cost us \$6 a barrel in 1972 will cost us \$34 a barrel in 1982. Incidentally, I hope you noticed how grateful the Saudis were for the AWACS sale. The very next day they thanked President Reagan by increasing their base cost by \$2 a barrel and more importantly they decreased their oil output by nearly 1 billion barrels, thus guaranteeing further rises in oil costs next year.

Whatever the theoretical strength and weakness of Reaganomics may be, I think it's clear that if the president continues to be able to shape Federal fiscal policy his way the result will be a major redistribution of social benefits. Fortunately there's no guarantee that he will. Pressures have already built up against the second and third year tax cuts and as the budget cuts begin to pinch, pressures will also build against many proposals in that area. The 16 billion dollar tax cut proposal which the administration recently submitted to Congress has led to attempts by many Legislators to shift its impact from social to defense programs. If David Stockman proposes, as he says he wants to, another multi-billion dollar budget cut early next year, those proposed cuts will be vigorously opposed. But let us be clear, if the country continues in the way Mr. Reagan has headed us we must be prepared for two inevitable and unfortunate consequences. Without question the quality of life, particularly urban life, will be reduced for all of us; our roads will be full of pot holes. Our bridges will deteriorate. Our parks will become unkempt. Our public school system will not be able to provide many important services and may even lose its central democratizing role in our society as the administration finds ways to encourage private schools. Our clinics will provide fewer medical services particularly the subsidized services now provided the poor. The infrastructure, to use that terrible word which economists love, the infrastructure of American life: mass transit, water and sewage systems, our ports, parks, airfields, will become shabbier and less available to us. The second, and in the long run, the more dangerous consequence of Reaganomics will be that the division between the have and the have-nots will increase and harden. It will be more and more difficult for the have-nots to catch up to the land of opportunity and it will be more and more difficult for them to even believe that they will have a chance to do so. Rising expectations will give way to frustration and anger and, I am afraid, violence.

I don't know if Federal expenditure equal to 21% of the Gross National Product is too great a figure or too little a figure. I suggest the answer depend upon the validity of the programs being funded and the value of these programs on our society. I can't imagine a complex, highly industrialized

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## FROM THE RABBI'S DESK

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society such as ours not requiring sustained high levels of Federal expenditures. The days of small government are gone forever. We need services, services of all kinds from the government, and we will become aware of how much we depend on these services as they are stripped away one by one. Contrary to Reaganomics it's simply not more efficient to do things on a local level than on a national level. If this were so we would not have fought for years for county or metropolitan government. It's surely more efficient to have the police, fire and safety forces in one bureau and to provide utilities, transit and cultural activities to a whole region.

It seems to me that Mr. Reagan has done all of us a disservice by focusing our attention on the bigness of government as if this fact alone was the cause of our economic woes. This country has serious economic problems, but these problems are not solely the result of the size of government and its inefficiency. We may be paying too much in taxes, we may be getting too little back in return but that's not the core problem. At the root of our economic woes lies our inefficient, often outmoded and often badly run industrial plants. In the lush years our captains of industry maximized profits at the expense of research and reindustrialization. Many were incredibly shortsighted. I give you Lockheed, I give you the railroad, I give you our shipyards and steel mills. Another major problem is that labor is not productive and has been more interested in fringe benefits than in first-rate products. The basic industries on which our city depends — steel, iron ore and the like — had a record until the last lean years of investing miniscule percentages of their profits in retolling and research and now they're asking the government to do it for them. Industry is at fault. Labor is at fault. The consumer society is at fault. Big government must bear some degree of fault but it's not the major culprit and shrinking the size of government will not automatically bring prosperity to the land.

Mr. Reagan has also practiced a certain amount of misdirection by focusing our attention on the size of the national debt. He has made it appear that if we could balance the budget the country would miraculously become prosperous again. If he by some miracle balances the budget the Federal debt will still be over a trillion dollars. He's made us all conscious of the image of the one trillion dollar budget debt as a stack of thousand dollar bills 67 miles high. Since you and I cannot imagine what one trillion dollars means, it's an overwhelming sum and we tend to agree with him when he says: 'yes, we must balance the budget at all costs and immediately.' But when you read the economists you discover that during the heyday of our prosperity, the decade which followed the end of the second world war, the Federal debt in proportion to the Gross National Product was two to three times what it is today. Around 1950, the debt in terms of the Gross National Product was 135% of that sum. Today it is less than 35% and the ratio of debt to the total goods and services produced in the land has been decreasing slowly over time. Most economists seem to believe that the level of debt which we now maintain is not the real problem this society faces. It would be better if the government were not paying double-digit

interest on the monies it has to borrow, but that's really not the crux of the matter. We had prosperity when we were much more in debt than we are today. Our problems have to do with archaic machinery, unproductive manpower, inadequate planning, inadequate research, lack of competitive will, materialism, and the foolish belief that no one could industrialize to compete with us. Remember how we laughed at Japan's first competitive efforts. Mr. Reagan has used the specter of the trillion dollar debt in order to frighten us to approve his plan to shrink the government. This is not an austerity budget, but a redistribution of power, a redistribution of wealth, a redistribution of benefits budget. Much is taken away and much is given. Farm subsidies remain. Windfall profits for energy companies remain. Faster and deeper writeoffs for business are included. Tax rates for the wealthy are reduced. The wealthy are allowed to pass on larger amounts of their substance to their children. Many forms of protection are given to American business against foreign competition.

This is not an austerity for all budget. It is an austerity for the poor budget and next year's budget will be an austerity for the middle class budget. One can hardly call the budget an austerity for the corporate society budget. It's not austerity for the kind of people who surround Mr. Reagan.

We are only one month into the first round of budget cuts and most of us have not yet begun to feel the shoe pinch. Because of the political bargaining which went into that bill, these first cuts will affect the poor more than they will affect the middle class. Mr. Reagan agreed not to touch for now most of the income redistribution proposals which affect the middle class: social security, Medicare, veterans benefits and basic unemployment insurance. Instead he cut some 14% from food stamps program. As an aside I must tell you a conversation I had this summer. It was at a country club and the subject was the Federal budget. One of the men with whom I was talking was particularly delighted with the cut in the food stamp program. He told me about people driving up to supermarkets in new cars and loading up with all kinds of wines and luxury items rather than staples. He went on for fifteen minutes. Within a half hour he was telling me with some glee how he had had his children apply to the government for low-interest scholarship loans because he could reinvest that money at a high rate of interest and pocket the difference.

Mr. Reagan has talked about a safety net, a safety net which he will put under social benefits for the poor so that no one will fall to his death because of the lack of food or medical care or heat. Unfortunately the safety net has a lot of holes in it. Money has been cut from the food stamp program, the Federal lunch program and Medicaid. The effect of many of these cuts will not be felt until the states begin to apportion the reduced funding they will receive. Yet some things are already clear. The entire program of free legal aid to the poor has been chopped — 300 million dollars, not a great deal of money. Its effect: the poor will no longer have the ability to challenge bureaucracy or slum lord. Many a family will not conform to the rigid standards which are being set up for enrollment and will be denied the benefits on which decency, if not life, depends. Did you see the other day that one of the ways the administration proposes to save some money is to declare catsup to

be a vegetable and therefore the law no longer requires schools to serve a vegetable to children in the free lunch program. Where will the poor get their vitamins and do we really want to go back to the era of malnutrition and junk foods? Most consumer defense programs have gone by the board. Health services have seen cuts.

Though the middle class feels secure for the moment, I'm firmly convinced that in order to achieve real ends this administration will also soon attack other benefit programs. Social security benefits will be held in place or shrunk. Various pension benefits will be held or shrunk relative to the cost of living. None of this, of course will happen unless the Congress votes for what the administration proposes and it is for this reason that we must be clear as to where the administration would like to go and what they would like to achieve. They propose, I believe, a return to the America of the 1920's where there were few legal protections for the poor, where the constitution was read as a document designed to protect property rather than people, and where little attention was shown to the inalienable rights of every citizen to enter into the society mainstream. I'm not arguing that all Fair Deal programs were wise or necessary. That's no longer the issue. I am in favor on constant review of all social programs. Over the last year a lot of dollars have been thrown away, but that period is over — at least for the poor. This administration seeks to put America on the path towards a redistribution of power, wealth and benefit, which is the reverse of the direction we have followed for the last fifty years. And I for one consider this change of direction, tragic. I believe that the economy must be made more competitive. I believe that industry must retool. I believe we need greater productivity but I believe that all of this must be achieved insofar as it can be achieved, within the context of the American dream — my dream and not Mr. Reagan's — the dream of the Founding Fathers and not of Mr. Reagan. The dream which looks to the commonwealth and the larger good and to human beings and human resources rather than simply to numbers on balance sheets and production charts. I am not arguing that we oughtn't to take a look at taxes or that government should not be made more accountable, but I do argue that the economic theories which we should use should assume values which include the human dimension as well as purely the corporate dimension, social benefits as well as the benefit of the elite. I want you to know that this Rabbi is not impressed with an economics game plan which is so indifferent to the human equation. I'm prepared as an individual and I think we all ought to be prepared to pay more and to have less in order for this society to remain an open society. I'm not prepared to have less to support an administration which bases its vision of American prosperity on belt-tightening for those who have the least and on tax relief for those who have the most. Amen.

*Daniel Jeremy Silver*