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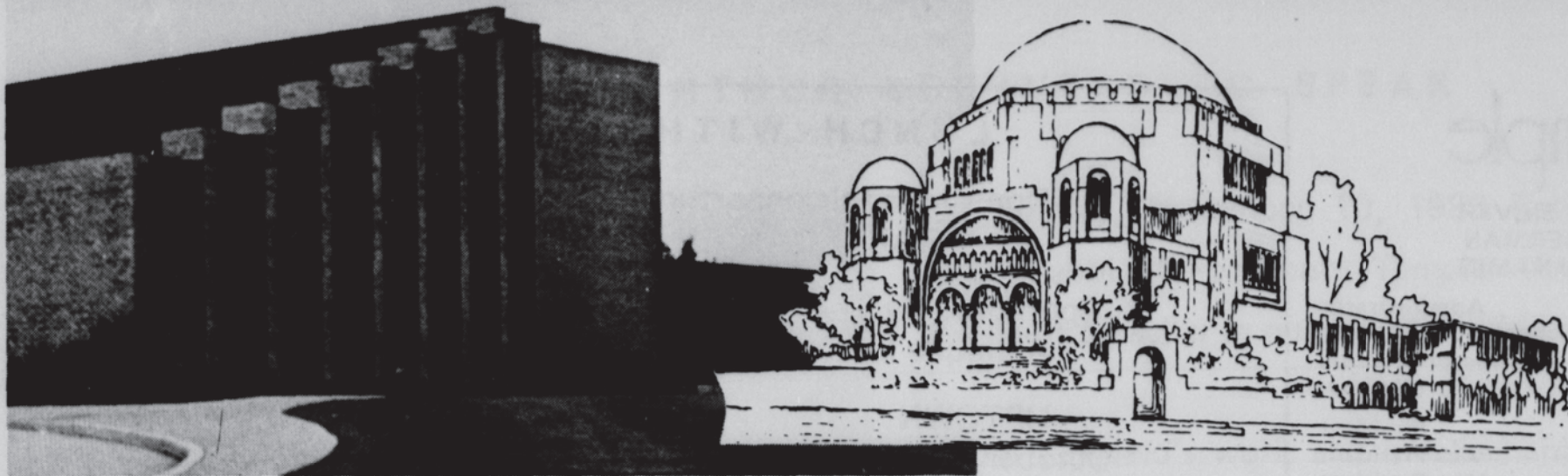
Sub-series B: Sermons, 1950-1989, undated.

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Rosh Hashanah sermon, 1985.



Vol. LXXI, No. 5
October 27, 1985

The Temple Bulletin

Anita Gray was this year's winner of the Marvin and Milton Kane Memorial Award for Young Leadership presented by the Jewish Community Federation last month. We reprint her address here with pride.

It occurred to me that if I were sitting where you are, I would be wondering why someone was *mish-uganah* enough to choose to convert to Judaism voluntarily. Let me tell you why... I'll put it the way Al does... A funny thing happened to me on the way to the Vatican.

I am very proud of the fact that I spent the first 11 years of my life on Kinsman. By the time I got there, it was a real melting pot kind of neighborhood with blacks and whites, Jews and Christians. I went to a day school. It was called St. Cecilia. Living in this real mix of people contributed greatly to helping me develop an open mind which allowed me to be very understanding of other people and traditions.

My father was born in Sicily. My mother is a first generation American, although her parents were born in the same shtetl, high on a Sicilian mountaintop. When I was 7, my brother, who was 14 years older than I, met and married a girl who was Jewish. I can still remember vividly my mother's *shrying* around the Sunday dinner table over the pasta. Little did I know what was going on at the other house. But there was understanding and give and take on both sides of the extended family, and my sister-in-law's family began coming to our house to help us celebrate Christmas and Easter, and we began going to their house on Rosh Hashanah and Passover out of respect for their tradition. So, from the age of 7 on, I found myself at a seder table, where oftentimes the Italians outnumbered the Jews.

I turned 21 in 1969, and like most other 21 year olds during the turbulent 60's, I underwent a personal crisis. When I turned to my own religion — Roman Catholicism, I quickly realized that it just didn't answer my needs. So, what to do?

I think it was only natural for me to take a look, if you will, at Judaism. I read a few books, and I liked what I learned, so I called a rabbi — Stuart Geller from The Temple. I met with him weekly for the period of one year, during which time I took some courses at the College of Jewish Studies.

What appealed to me about Judaism? The belief in one God. The fact that you were born into this world without an original sin, thereby allowing you to start life on a positive and not a negative basis. The latitude to be reform, conservative, orthodox or just Jewish, branches of Judaism which should all be respected and preserved. The concept of *tzedakah* and the major part it plays in Judaism; and the fact that Judaism provided me with a valid and meaningful — very beautiful — way of life and a respect for tradition. As a result, I became more aware and appreciative of my own Sicilian roots, so much so that Al and I visited Sicily and rediscovered family that had been lost after the War. I understood for the first time why this trip was so meaningful for Al. He couldn't do this for his European family because they were all lost in the Holocaust.

After the one year period with Rabbi Geller, he felt I was ready to be converted. I remember having this strange feeling it took some time for me to identify. What it was was the fact that after this period of time, I didn't feel Jewish. It takes more

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SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES

October 27, 1985
10:30 a.m.
The Temple Branch

Rabbi
DANIEL JEREMY SILVER

will speak on

STAR WARS AND OTHER
LETHAL GAMES — IS ARMS
CONTROL POSSIBLE?

November 3, 1985
10:30 a.m.
The Temple Branch

Rabbi
DANIEL JEREMY SILVER

will speak on

WHO IS A JEW?

Friday Evening Service — 5:30 - 6:10 — The Temple Chapel
Shabbat Celebration — 9:30 a.m. — The Temple Branch

ROSH HASHANAH

The sermon of Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver of September 15, 1985

Tartuffe, Moliere's classic portrayal of the religious hypocrite, has been playing here to appreciative audiences. Tartuffe is a man beset by lust and by greed who portrays himself to the outside world as devoted to God. He has a sanctimonious explanation for his every act. In our tradition he would have been called "one who fears not God but wraps himself in his *tallit*."

Tartuffe was first produced in 1664 at Versailles for the King of France and an audience which included the major prelates of the kingdom. The production was much appreciated. The Cardinals knew that Moliere's point was not to attack religion but its counterfeit. Indeed, Moliere had given a prominent role in his piece to an actor who represents the reasonable man and has him say in various ways that the real proof of piety lies in a life of virtue, that if you look at how a person lives you can read back to their religious commitment. By their works, not their words, shall you know them.

This thought has comforted religious folk in all ages. Dissemblance is a familiar vice, and it is comforting to think that if everyone were honest and straight-forward in their religious commitments, all would be right with the community. Presumably, a community's problems are created by its hypocrites, not its truly religious.

I wonder. As I review the year I find little evidence to support this comforting assumption. The men who hi-jacked the TWA plane and held some forty hostages in Beirut for more than a week were loyal members of the *Hasballah*, the Party of God. Those hostages who had Jewish sounding names and were kept apart from the rest were under the control of the Party's *mullahs*, their religious leaders. Simply put, there is no reason to doubt the religious convictions of these men.

Some months before, a *Sikh* preacher barricaded himself and his followers in the Golden Temple of Amritsar, determined to bring about the creation of an independent, theocratic *Sikh* state in the Punjab. Demonstration can be justified, but this man armed his disciples and told them that it was their religious duty to send the enemy to Hell.

Wherever we look, whether we look at the Lebanon or India or the Sudan or Northern Ireland, we see religiously committed men and women committing violent acts. They are not hypocrites. Their faith is, to use the modern term, authentic; but they cause great harm to others and sow much mischief in our world. Indeed, it has come to the point that we do not know whether to call someone a freedom fighter or a terrorist, and our decision as to which term to apply is more often than not determined by no better a yardstick than whether or not we have some sympathy for his cause. Two words have become conjoined in our political vocabulary which should be quite opposite in meaning — holiness and violence. Again and again the religiously committed justify their actions as holy violence, violence committed in the name of their god or their ideology.

The ultimate symbol of the committed religious figure who preaches holy violence is the Ayatollah of Iran, Khomeini. One can have some sympathy with the revolution which overthrew the Shah and

his secret police; but surely, the Ayatollah's mullah-led terror has been, if anything, more brutal and bloody than that of the Shah; and his eagerness to spread an imperialistic faith — his war to coerce Muslims who do not accept the Shiite way and his *Jihad* against infidels has helped to precipitate the bloodiest war of the decade, countless car bombings and other acts of holy violence. The evil done by the religiously committed is a cause of concern to anyone who cares about religious faith for it belies the comfortable assumption that a good dose of faith would do wonders for our world.

Those princes of the church who applauded Tartuffe in the seventeenth century knew full well that violence was often committed in the name of religion, but they comforted themselves that such violence was caused by heretics and those blind to the true faith. If the faithful took to arms it was only in self-defence. Their Europe was wracked by the Hundred Years War, a religious war; but the Cardinals believed that the war had been precipitated by heretics — Calvin, Luther, Zwingli, the Reformers — by the enemy. Heresy presumably breeds violence while true faith encourages peace. When religious commitment leads to hurt and harm, it is because those who do the harm serve false gods or false values. The true faith can only lead to a virtuous life. Unfortunately we tend to be blind to our failings.

The harm created by the religious of our times is not limited to Shiites, Sikhs and Christians. Judaism is not immune. We have our own bush league Khomeini, a rabbi, a religious man, Meir Kahane. There is no reason to doubt Kahane's religious commitment. The problem is not that he is a hypocrite but that his religion includes the thesis that Jews are superior by nature to other peoples and that God has chosen him to lead a movement to drive all Arabs out of the Promised Land. "Give me the power," he has said, "and I will get rid of them."

Americans tend to have a good bit of trouble freeing themselves of the idea that religions are a force for good. The Founding Fathers wisely disestablished religion, thus ending the age-old partnership of church and state. This political fact and the reality of a highly diverse population prevented most of our faith communities from assuming and being corrupted by power. For most of our history religious groups have concerned themselves largely with the purely humane and helpful concerns of religious life. Religious communities created and maintain many of our institutions of healing, learning and social welfare. Many religious communities have been among the strongest defenders of Civil Rights. The American pulpit has generally promoted social welfare legislation, peace, education and mental health and has made over the years significant contributions to the common good as well as to countless individual lives. We have not had to endure crusades or inquisitions or religious wars, so it is hard for us to think of religion in other but positive terms. Still, there have been religious tensions and preachers who justified white supremacy from the Bible. Even here the consequences of religious commitment have been ambiguous.

A friend of mine, an academic economist, spent

much of this past year on a research project in sub-Saharan Africa. While he was there, John Paul II came through on one of his preaching missions. In Africa the Pope spoke of the need for the industrialized states of the north to provide seed money for the development of the southern tier of industrially undeveloped countries. He also told the leaders of the countries he visited that they should not organize public programs of birth control. My academic friend was livid. How could a man who claimed to care about human suffering tell these people that their few economic accomplishments would have to be sacrificed to his reading of a three-thousand year old text and medieval church doctrine? Without birth control whatever they had achieved would be drowned by the flood of children, children they cannot feed, care for, educate or, ultimately, employ. He added quietly, after all, he knew my profession: "In many ways our world might be better off without religion."

Shall we do away with religion? We can't, even if we share this evening, a sense of the sacred, a community of concern, the sanctifying ties of love and family. Religion is the voice of Amos, Isaiah and Micah decrying injustice and callousness. Religion can be and often is a force for compassion, decency, a brotherhood of concern, civilization. Without religion our world would be a bleaker place.

Shall we do away with religion? We can't, even if this were advisable. We might as well say: let us do away with love or the esthetic spirit. The religious deed is elemental. We're here. None of us decided that we wanted to be born, but we're here and we're aware of being here. Being aware and sensitive we need to feel that life has some meaning besides somehow surviving the day. We need to believe that the values we cherish will help us shape a meaningful life and that by committing ourselves to what we consider to be right we are helping our world overcome its problems.

The Bible's most succinct description of human nature defines us as prisoners of hope, *Asirei Tikvah*. We need to hope that life holds some promise beyond eating, surviving, procreating, and avoiding death as long as we can. We need to believe that what we do is meaningful and that most of our world's problems can be solved; and because we are social creatures our expression of faith inevitably becomes translated into some religious organization. Once institutional, religion inevitably draws to itself all the good human beings are capable of all the folly that we are capable of; hence, its ambiguous impact.

The realization that religions by their nature are ambiguous phenomenon is not a recent perception. Throughout the nineteenth century many social reformers argued that religion was in league with the forces of privilege and that for effective reform to take place religion's hold on people's spirits would have to be pried loose. They claimed that the central imprint of Christianity on Europe was the message that this is a vale of tears, a time of trial, and that people should be patient and prove themselves in adversity so as to be able to claim the ultimate reward. The reformers wanted to raise the consciousness of the oppressed. They wanted the poor to believe that much could be ac-

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complished by political means which would benefit them, and they decried this gospel of patience as an opiate which stood in the way of necessary political activism. The more revolutionary thinkers created an ideology and then a cultural structure in which religion had no place. Communism is based on a perceived need to do away with religion; but since this can not be done, these rebels succeeded only in creating a new religion which was in most ways more doctrinaire and more rigid than the old faiths, a faith which was not humanized by the all important emphasis on the dignity and sanctity of the individual human life which the older faith enshrined. Communism created a religious structure which had all the familiar forms of the older religious communities and few of their virtues, a religion without a soul.

Since the religious spirit is a universal one, there is little profit in condemning religion even when religious people commit harmful and violent acts. But clearly, we must be alert to religion's dark side, particularly so at a time like ours which is distinguished by an upsurge in religious conviction and politically oriented religious activity. There is every reason for us to examine how we actualize our convictions; whether our religiously-motivated activity is, in fact, as we like to believe, a force for good.

These are convulsive times and it is understandable that many of those who have been unsettled should seek desperately for stability and security, something to hold on to. Religion seems a natural place to find stability. A religious tradition seems to offer the "proven" experience of the past. So we live at a time when many seek to reshape their society after the image of the presumed successful standards and practices of the fathers. Our troubled world is full of competing traditions and ideologies and it is also perhaps inevitable that many should feel a need to confirm their values by denying the truth or validity to other points of view. When we do not want to think about other points of view, we simply shut them out. So the chorus of voices which demand that everyone conform to that which they believe to be true.

As long as our nation was prosperous and had an open frontier, most people accepted the concept of religious pluralism, live and let live. Today the frontier is closed and prosperity is not as widely spread as it was only a few years ago. Not surprisingly, the voices demanding conformity have increased. Some say the schools must not only teach children what science can tell us about the creation of the universe and human life but that a literalist interpretation of the first chapter of Genesis is a supportable theory. Why? Simply because that is their belief. Others say that we must agree with their views about the inception of human life and give up the right to have an abortion because they believe that God has decreed that abortion is always and ever a murder. Others would censor our reading or viewing.

When we come to this point in this discussion, most of us who are, after all, neither orthodox nor fundamentalist in our religious commitments, feel quite comfortable. We are not religious fanatics. We have an open mind. I find this approach somewhat self-serving and, certainly, self-deluding. Most

of us do not have open minds; I certainly do not. I have convictions. I believe in justice and freedom and the mandate to be busy on their behalf. I believe that God endowed each individual with a spark of His divinity. I believe that human life is sacred and that the spark of compassion and sensitivity in each of us must be developed. I believe in the sacredness of marriage and in the importance of community. I believe in the oneness of God and of humanity. I believe in constitutional democracy. I believe in a truly color blind world. I believe that God has a special purpose for all peoples and for our people, and that Jews have a responsibility to become a model community for the value of being such a community and for the good of all.

I have discovered that those who claim to have an open mind, if they truly have one, have no mind at all. Some flutter between opinions, espousing whatever point of view has been most recently presented to them. Others withhold commitment, not that they are indifferent, mind you. 'Show me the truth, I'll act.' Unfortunately, when it comes to ultimate issues of value, there is no 'The Truth.' Ultimate truths are hidden from mankind. The Greeks put it graphically. I am paraphrasing Democritus, 'the gods shrouded The Truth and put it down a deep well where it will never be found.' The rabbinic tradition suggests that God cast Truth from heaven before He created the human race. Why was Adam not allowed to eat from the tree of knowledge? Lest humans assume that we knew The Truth. "God's ways are not our ways and God's thoughts are not our thoughts; just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are God's ways higher than our ways and His thoughts than our thoughts."

If you wait to know The Truth you will wait forever. No one can prove to you that what they believe to be right is in fact the right; or what they believe to be good is, in fact, the good; or that what they believe to be necessary is, in fact, absolutely necessary.

The closed mind knows The Truth. The closed mind has heard God and knows exactly what God wills. The closed mind assumes, therefore, it is an act of simple goodness on their part to coerce us to agree with them, what they know to be The Truth. You cannot argue with the closed mind. They know. The truth is manifest. It's in a book — the Koran, the Bible, the New Testament — it's there, known, certain.

The open mind is paralyzed because certainty cannot be found. Lacking convictions of its own, the open mind vacillates. Those who possess an open mind are usually steamrollered by people of closed mind who are certain and, therefore, coercive and imperial.

What then?

Let me remind you of an incident from Biblical history. David, the first king of Israel, conquered Jerusalem from the Jebusites and established it as Israel's capital. The conqueror had two great hopes: that he would build there his palace; and that he would build there The Temple. He was able to build the palace before he died, but he was not able to begin building The Temple. When

Solomon came to the throne, he immediately undertook to complete his father's program. One of the first acts of his reign was the erection and dedication of The Temple. According to the Book of Kings, God was pleased with Solomon and told the king: "Ask what you will and it will be given to you." What did Solomon ask for: He asked for a *lev shomeah*, an understanding heart? literally a heart that continues to listen. He made this request, he said, that I may know between right and wrong, that I may act as judge of my people.

The listening heart is a wonderful image. Solomon knew what was right and what was wrong. Israel had a Torah, a consecrated law, which Solomon used as the framework for his task as judge. But Solomon also knew that in judgement one must take into consideration circumstance, motive, consequence, provocation and opportunity. A judge needs to have a listening heart in order to apply the law with some degree of equity or fairness.

There is the closed mind; there is the open mind; and there is the fair mind. The fair mind has convictions and acts on these convictions, but knows how to listen. The fair minded person does not apply rules arbitrarily. He knows he cannot predict all the consequences of his actions, that he may be wrong, that he must listen to advice, that he must be prepared to learn from experience. The fair-minded person admits, in other words, that he is human, fallible; that he is not God, infallible. His faith is never utterly free of doubt.

It is easy for us to decry the closed mind of the fundamentalists and of the fanatic. We are not literalists or fanatics. We see ourselves as liberal religious folk and pride ourselves that we keep an open mind when it comes to religious ritual, and we do. We are not likely to throw stones at someone who drives by on the Sabbath. But do we have a listening heart in other areas of our life? I wonder. All of us have political and social convictions. Do we discuss or do we debate: Do we listen or do we preach: Are we so certain of our political and social convictions that we willingly allow decisions to be left up to a democratic process or do we try in other ways to impose our will because we are convinced that we know better than anyone else what is right and necessary?

Each of us has certain attitudes about what is right and wrong in terms of family relationships, marriage and parenting. We were raised a certain way and we are convinced that a certain set of relationships is the appropriate one. When we are certain of what needs to be done to improve the world, we love to quote those great prophetic statements from our Bible, "righteousness, righteousness, shall thou pursue," "proclaim freedom unto the land," as proof texts for our particular political agenda. Are we so impatient of the counsels of prudence and the voice of experience — "you won't get all that you want," "you may cause hurt along the way" — that we no longer listen? Do we have a listening heart or a closed mind?

Those who are so certain of their social or political agenda that they are indifferent to the con-

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sequences of their crusade upon others, are no different from the religious fanatic. They know, as he does, The Truth and those who know The Truth care little about whether others are hurt as long as they achieve their goals.

I stand on this pulpit below a magnificent representation of God's Commandments, the great do's and don'ts of civilization. I have commitments and so do you, and each of us needs to act on these commitments, but we must be careful to do so with a degree of sympathy for others, aware of differences in circumstance and of the possibility that we may be wrong.

One of the tragedies of our times is that as religious movements have moved more aggressively onto the political stage, negotiation has become increasingly difficult. When it was only a matter of traditional greed - Germany wants Alsace and France wants

Alsace - negotiations can allow Germany to take this steel mill and France that steel mill, and for a period of time the world will have a modicum of peace. But when the issue is an issue of creed rather than greed, there can be no negotiation. Israel has had to fight five wars, not because statesmen could not devise some doable political ment but because the religious say that as long as a country has once been *dar-al Islam*, part of the Islamic world, it can never be allowed to revert to a non-Islamic status. It became *dar-al-harb*, a province where war is legitimate, even mandatory, until the desired end is achieved. The true believer cannot negotiate.

Most literalists and ideologues truly believe that The Truth is in some scripture. The Truth exists. Is it Koran or Das Capital? I wonder. An outsider reading these books will not come away with their truth. The Truth, their Truth, is in their minds

before it is in their Book. There is a wonderful Hasidic story which describes a young yeshivah student who is trying to ingratiate himself with a prospective father-in-law. The father-in-law, trying to make conversation, asks: "Well, young man, what have you accomplished?" The *yeshivah* student answers proudly, "I've gone through the Talmud three times." The father-in-law responds: "How much of the Talmud has gone through you?"

My question to you this Rosh Hashanah is this: How much of your heart, your spirit, is still open, receptive, flexible, committed, yet sensitive? Have you made over Judaism in your image? How much of Judaism has gone through you? May this new year find each of us cultivating a listening heart.

YOM KIPPUR

The sermon of Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver of September 25, 1985

Science tells us that earthquakes are caused by elastic strain energy which develops within and between the great plates which form the crust of our earth. Almost all we know about fault lines and seismic waves has been discovered in this century; so over the long course of history people have tended to explain natural disasters in a far simpler way; to ascribe them to the hand of God. Many still do. Last Thursday when our morning newspaper described the devastation in Mexico City, it featured on the front page a photograph, obviously posed, which showed two men standing in the rubble looking at a local tabloid whose headline read: "*O Dios*," Oh, God.

O Dios can be taken as a simple sign of disgust and resignation at what had happened; but, knowing something of human nature, I suspect that the sigh included the suspicion that God had not only caused the earthquake but had intended it to happen to them. In pre-modern societies once an earthquake or volcanic eruption occurred, the shamans and the priests quickly set about performing those formal ceremonies which were believed to have the power to assuage the anger of the gods. It was assumed that the gods had struck out at the people.

If truth be told, Yom Kippur emerged from this primitive set of ideas. Yom Kippur began as an annual prophylactic ceremony, organized to make sure that Israel's sins did not pile up to the point that God would feel constrained to strike out against the community. After appropriate rites and sacrifices had been performed, the High Priest would enter the inner sanctum of The Temple and intone a sentence taken from Scripture which promised that this day had the power to purge Israel of its sins - "for on this day you shall be quit of all your sins, from all your sins shall you be pure."

It is to the credit of our ancestors that they did not develop Yom Kippur as a purely formal exercise. It was not inevitable that once the ceremony had been performed Israel's sins were remitted. Our fathers emphasized that contrition, confession,

teshuvah, honest repentance, were absolutely essential for Yom Kippur to have its desired effect. Still, at base, Yom Kippur was intended to be a day which would distance the community from danger of God's righteous anger.

Given the events of this last week, it is worth nothing that events of this kind, particularly the earthquake, played a significant role in our people's history. The original site of Jerusalem lies just south of the Old City walls. Like Mexico City, Jerusalem was built on unstable land. Over the last several decades, as archeologists have dug into that original site, the city of King David, they found that large courses of stone once used as walls had been moved several feet from their foundations by quakes.

At one point in his career, the prophet Isaiah was told by God to bring an oracle of judgement against Jerusalem. Its citizens had sinned and God had determined to punish them. Their punishment would take the form of a devastating earthquake which Isaiah graphically described in language which might well have been used by an eye witness to the events of last week! "She (Jerusalem) shall be remembered by the Lord God; with a roaring, with shaking, with deafening noise, with storm, with tempest, and with blaze of consuming fire."

Earthquakes also played a role in the imagery with which our ancestors imagined Judgement Day, the day when God would come down in the magnificence of His power and change the very nature of life on Judgement Day, according to the popular understanding, the mountains would be brought low and the valleys would be lifted up. To give the people some idea of the puissance of God, a visionary whose apocalypse was later appended to the scroll of Zechariah, reminded his audience of a great earthquake which had occurred in Jerusalem during the days of King Uzziah. "On that day He will set His feet upon the Mountain of Olives, near Jerusalem in the east; and the Mount of Olives shall split across from east to west. Part of the mount shall shift to the north and the other part shall shift to the south forming a huge gorge. The

Valley of the Hills shall be stopped up as it was stopped in the times of Uzziah, King of Judah. Then the Lord my God shall come to you."

Language tends to retain traces of once popular attitudes long after these have dropped out of common currency. The insurance industry still uses the term, "act of God," but does so only to indicate a natural disaster as if a beautiful, sunlit autumn day like the one we are enjoying were not also an act of God. In this sense our ancestors were far wiser than we. They saw God in the orderliness of the universe as well as in its disorder; in the sunshine as in the storm; not only in the miracle of the original Creation but in the everyday maintenance and management of Creation.

The many cultures of the ancient Middle East shared the assumption that all that happens in life in some way or other reflects the hand of the gods or of God. All events are, in a sense, determined by a power beyond. Ancient Israel shared this common understanding; but Israel went one decisive step further. Our ancestors came to affirm not only that God controls all that happens but that His actions are taken in response to our own. God does not act willfully. He is just, which is to say that He takes in consideration what we do. Goodness is rewarded and evil is punished. God is *Ei Ne'eman*, a steadfast, dependable God.

One way to illustrate the difference between the conventional wisdom of the ancient world about the power of the gods and Israel is to remind you of the different treatments accorded to one of the most popular stories told in the ancient world: the story of the sole survivor of a devastating flood.

As this story was told by the Sumerians and the Babylonians, the gods determined to destroy mankind because we are a noisy lot. Our banging about disturbed the gods in their mountain retreat. The lone survivor was chosen because he was good looking and had gained the favor of a powerful goddess. In the later version, the Biblical version, mankind is destroyed because it is corrupt and vio-

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lent and Noah is saved because he has retained his righteousness despite the prevailing evil of his age.

If the acts of the gods are largely unrelated to those of mankind, what we do doesn't really matter. Inevitably, if our best laid plans can be frustrated because the gods take offense because their siesta has been disturbed, what can humans hope to accomplish of any lasting value? Burdened with this sense of futility, most ancient cultures developed fatalistic and pessimistic attitudes toward life. If nothing we do really matters, why do it? They lived with the fear that their best made plans could be thwarted by the unpredictable whim of a god.

It is really not surprising that mankind's first outcry for social righteousness was raised by the prophets of ancient Israel. Isaiah, Amos and Micah spoke from within the heart of a tradition which insisted that God would establish securely the goodness that men do, that goodness is more than a fugitive, evanescent quality, that God is dependable.

Our tradition expressed this affirmation in a great myth, the myth of Sinai. Three months after the Exodus the tribes of Israel reach Mt. Sinai. Moses is ordered up the mountain where he receives God's instructions, the do's and the don'ts, the right and the wrong. But more than this happens at Sinai. Sinai is not only the mountain of revelation; it is the place where a contract, the covenant between God and Israel, was signed and made effective. At Sinai, God not only reveals His instructions but something about the operation of history. God tells Israel: if you accept this contract, know that you are accepting obligations which can have serious consequences. When you obey My instructions I will reward you; if you are disobedient, I will punish you. If you are willing and obedient you will be secure in your place, there will be peace, security and abundance; but if you are disobedient you will be punished, there will be droughts, plague and defeat. My actions will take yours into account. Here is a radically new assumption, the claim that there is a moral basis to all that happens.

This faith has proven to be one of the most liberating ever developed by humankind. When we affirm the possibility of life, we try to actualize that possibility. Conversely, when we feel that what we do will not be consequential, we do not really try. Then we say: it doesn't matter what I do, life is unpredictable. We begin to live only for ourselves. We say: "I will look out for *numero uno*." "I will do what I need to do for myself, for my family and the devil to the rest of the world."

In our secular age, few recognize anymore the radical nature of the statement that God is just, but almost all of us live by this faith. In general terms, we accept Hosea's claim that "those who sow the wind shall reap the whirlwind," that as you sow so shall you reap. Even if we do not frame our faith in theological terms, most of us commit ourselves to causes which transcend our self-interest out of the conviction that what we do has consequence, that our efforts will not go for nothing. We live as if Israel's faith were, in fact, true.

The affirmation that God is just lies at the heart of

our tradition and at the heart of the social consciousness of the western world. But there is a problem. An idea may, in fact, be liberating but may not, in fact, be verifiable. It is one thing to quote Isaiah, "If you are willing and obedient you shall eat of the good of the land; if you refuse and rebel, you shall be devoured by the sword;" another to find evidence to support his assertion. In point of fact, history provides few object lessons which substantiate this claim.

Let's take our own history as a microcosm. Has our people deserved to be the victim as often as we have been? Where is there proof that righteous living is rewarded and selfish and callous actions are punished? Was Mexico City a modern Sodom and Gomorrah that needed to be leveled?

Perhaps the most striking fact of our long religious history is that from the time when we first developed a distinctive religious consciousness, our people have held fast to this faith despite experiences which bring this affirmation into serious question. Faith in God's justice underlies the mood and message of the entire High Holiday period, all that we have read this morning. You know the folk legend. Rosh Hashanah is *Yom ha-Din*. Each of us, in turn, appears before the divine throne. Our deeds are read out, weighed: and a judgement is made, announced but not certified and sealed. The ten days between Rosh Hashanah and the end of Yom Kippur offers us a chance to acknowledge the rightness of the decision made, to be contrite, to make atonement, to repent. Presumably, if we do so the sentence will be mitigated. On Yom Kippur after we have had ample opportunity to make atonement is the sentence irrevocably sealed. So on Rosh Hashanah we say *L'shanah Tovah Tikatevu*, may you be written for good in the book of life; and on Yom Kippur we say, *L'shanah Tovah tikatevu v'tehatemu*, may you be written and sealed for good in the Book of Life.

The folk image visualizes in an uncomplicated way the faith which brings us here. We believe that we can do more with our lives than we have done. We believe that there are sources of compassion and empathy within us which we have not allowed out. We believe that we have failed others in ways we need not have failed. We believe that we can improve the quality of our lives and that if we do our lives will be more consequential not only to ourselves but to others. As we sow, so shall we reap. A just God will establish what we do.

Judaism rests on this faith. In the presence of his dead the Jew affirmed: *Baruch dayyan ha-emet*, blessed be the God who is just. Rabbinic Judaism defined atheism not as the denial of God but as the statement, *Le'it din v'leit dayyan*, there is no justice and there is no judge. That is our faith. Is it simply blind faith? Have we who have so steadfastly affirmed the moral basis of life done so simply out of a kind of unthinking stubbornness? When I think of blind faith I think of sheep, thoughtlessly, heedlessly following a lead goat without lifting their heads. That is clearly not the way it has been.

The Bible contains the contract of covenant with its affirmation of the moral basis of life and of

God's justice; and a sturdy denial of God's justice; Job's complaint. Job affirms his innocence. Job insists he has been punished excessively and without warrant and he cries out against the faith articulated by those who come to comfort him that there is a moral basis to life: "It is all one. God destroys the wicked and the righteous. When the scourge strikes, He mocks the pain of the guiltless.

Let me tell you a striking *aggada* from the Talmud. A conversation takes place in Heaven between God and Moses. God has been eulogizing to Moses the superlative qualities of Rabbi Akiba. Akiba is described as learned, pious and loyal and in all these virtues without peer. Moses is so taken by this description that he asks God for permission to go down and hear this sage expound his wisdom. God grants him that request. Moses visits the academy of Akiba. He sits in a back row and listens. He is deeply impressed by Akiba's wisdom, so much so that when he goes back to Heaven he asks God: "How is it that knowing that Akiba would come along, you chose me to be the agent of your Torah?" God answers simply: "Silence, that was my decree." Moses can't stop talking about Akiba. He wants God to show him the reward that awaits this man of supreme virtue. God sends Moses back to earth. Moses finds himself in a town square in Israel. A bon fire is burning in the middle of the square and a man is bound to a stake in the middle of the flames. He is being burned alive. That man is Akiba. Akiba was one of the spiritual leaders of the Bar Kochba Rebellion and the Romans executed him for his role in that revolt. Aghast, Moses returns to Heaven and challenges God: "How can such be the reward of one so deserving of blessing?" God responds simply: "Silence, that is my decree."

Our people knew. They knew and kept silent. They knew and lived as if it could be shown that there is a moral basis to life.

Why so? Because not to live that way would have been to deny the sense of possibility which surges within the human soul, the spark of divinity which is in each of us, their destiny.

I am often with people to whom life has not been fair: the ill, mourners, those who have had an unhappy reversal of fortune, and in those moments often find myself thinking of the *hasid* who went to visit his rebbe, Rabbi Mendel of Kotsk. The *hasid* was disturbed. "I have evil thoughts." "What are these, my son?" "I often think that there is no justice and there is no judge; the world is lawless." "Why is that of concern to you, my son?" "Because if the world is lawless, if there is no justice and no judge, what purpose is there to life?" "What concern is that to you my son?" "Because if there is no purpose to life, of what value is the Torah, God's Instructions, knowledge of right and wrong?" "Of what concern is that to you, my son?" "I am concerned. It troubles me." Rabbi Mendel of Kotsk then answered: "Since you are concerned I can see that you are an honorable man, and honorable men are allowed such thoughts." I suspect this was his way of saying that all of us sometimes find the earth quaking beneath us, that all of us sometimes face life's unfairness, that sometime all of us wonder if in fact our

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hopes for ourselves, our children and our world have any chance of coming to fruition, if all may not end up in a nuclear winter; but that if we are people of honor, of dignity, who have a sense of the divinity within ourselves, we persevere. To do less would be to dishonor ourselves.

No philosopher or theologian has developed a fully satisfying explanation which can justify the proposition that God is just, the affirmation that there is a moral basis to life. She was angry, bitter. "I've tried in every way I can, devoted myself entirely to my family. I tried to be a good wife and a good mother, and he simply walked out on me." I spoke to her of the love and the respect that she enjoyed from her children. I spoke to her of the self-respect which she had maintained, but I knew that I had not fully answered the unspoken question.

They were a fine group of young people but frustrated and confused. They had dropped out of college for a year and devoted themselves to the Nuclear Freeze Movement. They had given of their time and their best effort. They had spent their own money and now they felt "it was all pointless." "The defense budget is higher than it was. Star war weapons are being designed." I spoke to them of the close ties of friendship which they had developed among themselves. I reminded them of a lesson that rabbis learn quite early: that you never know when you touch a life and what the consequences of that touch may be. But I also knew that I had not fully answered the unspoken question.

I overheard a conversation: two fine people in their sixties who had fought in all of Israel's war. They still had patrol duties. Their children and grandchildren, boys and girls, were now in the army. A grandson had been killed in the Lebanon. At a time when, in this country, many of their age group were comfortably retired, each had to maintain two full-time jobs. Taxes were higher than they had ever been. The inflation was higher yet. I heard them speak of the satisfactions of having been part of the rebirth of the Jewish national home, but I could hear in their voices that they were not fully satisfied. They had not fully answered the unspoken question.

One can always find a silver lining in the clouds, but the clouds are still there. A bright light may dispel the darkness, but the darkness is all about the beam. There is no reason for us to deny the clouds or the shadows, to try to put a good face on all that happens. We should recognize that there is civilization as well as the arms race. There are stable homes as well as unstable people leading destabilizing lives. There has been progress, but there is no way, no way at all, of proving without a shadow of doubt, that there is a moral basis to all that happens, that as you sow so shall you reap, that God is just. Yet, such is our faith. We repeated the prayer which begins: "It is true, it is true, that God is just." Why do we affirm? Because to live as if there is a moral basis to life is to brighten our lives with the light of hope; and to abandon that faith is to consign our spirit to a dismal hopelessness.

A thought for this Yom Kippur. If we are truly convinced that we are partners with God in the work of creation, then we must be partners with God in the moral ordering of the universe. We can't expect God to do it all Himself.

Some years ago I read an incident in the life of a man named Shragai who had been an officer of the Jewish Agency at the end of the second World War. He described a visit to Poland in the late 1940's at a time when it was still possible for the pitiful remnant of Polish Jewry to emigrate to Israel. He had come to facilitate that emigration. When his work was completed, he needed to return to his office in Paris. The only way to get there was to take a local train which took a day and a half. The Polish officials assigned him a compartment of his own, perhaps because he was an official, more likely because he was a Jew, and they wanted to limit his contacts with their citizens.

As he sat in his compartment, Shragai noticed an old Jew standing on the platform and invited him to share his compartment. The Jew entered. Shragai tried to begin a conversation, but the man was silent. Shragai was an Orthodox Jew. It came time for the evening prayers and he rose to his duty. The old man remained seated, silent. The night passed. Morning came. Shragai put on his *tallit* and his *tefillin* and recited the morning pray-

ers. The old man remained seated, silent. The day passed. Evening came again. They were now approaching the French border and Shragai who had given up any hope of talking with the man began, again, the evening prayer. This time, to his surprise, the old man stood up with him. Once the prayers were complete the old man said simply, "After Auschwitz I swore I would never pray again, but I looked at you, alone, and I thought, how few are left. I felt that God might be sad."

God must be saddened by the mischief caused by those who miserably abuse the freedom and the opportunities of life. He must be saddened by the indifference of the many, or rather, their self-involvement which causes them to be concerned only with what is important to them, to be indifferent to the needs of others.

Have we, too, left God alone? Does it not behoove us to stand up and affirm this sturdy faith of ours, to take advantage of this day, to make full use of the possibilities of the life God has given us? Must we not affirm life's possibilities by using this opportunity to search our soul, judge ourselves, without all the usual rationalizations so that when we leave here after *Neilah* we will set to work with God to make sure that justice triumphs, that good is made secure, that civilization is strengthened? Can we not declare ourselves active partners with God, committed partners in the work of creation?

One final image. The rabbis said that there are three ways to accept the sorrow of this world and that is really what we're talking about. On the lowest level there are tears, private grief. On a slightly higher level there is silence, acceptance, stoic resignation. On the highest level there are those who manage to turn suffering into a song, who manage not to be coarsened or hardened by the slings and arrows of an outrageous fortune but to remain sensitive, if anything to become more compassionate, to sing a song of love, a song of service, a song of moral commitment. Surely each of us would like to stand on the rung of song and our faith teaches us that the song of service we will sing will be heard by God and become part of the harmony which sustains life.

YIZKOR

The sermon of Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver of September 25, 1985

As many of you know, those whose parents were still alive used to leave the synagogue for the period of the Memorial Service. This custom is usually explained on the basis of a fear that those who stayed might remind the *Malach ha-Mavet*, the Angel of Death, that he had overlooked someone in their family. I doubt many still believe in a *Malach ha-mavet*, but this old custom lingers largely, I believe, because experience has taught us that *Yizkor* really casts its healing spell only on those who have reason to grieve.

If we have not yet suffered the death of someone close, we tend to approach death philosophically. We deal with death as an idea. We observe: "the elderly must die to make room for the young." I remember a young woman telling me as if it were a

revelation: "if death did not exist it would have to be invented." What she said is true, of course. The leaves must fall each autumn to make room for the spring buds, but when we grieve our concern is not with the concept of death, death's role in some cosmic plan; but with our feelings, with our reactions to a particular death. When we mourn it is cold comfort to be reminded that everyone must die. *Yizkor* is a service, not a seminar. When we are hurt we need encouragement, not philosophy.

Yizkor speaks to the heart. The language is that of prayer. The music is minor-keyed. Many of the readings are taken from the Funeral Service: the 23rd Psalm, the *El Malei Rahamim* and the *Kaddish*. This was done deliberately for *Yizkor*, as

the very name implies, encourages us to summon up our special memories and bring them into the sanctuary. Grief chills the soul. Memories warm the heart. Memory, a poet once observed, is the power to gather roses in winter.

When I was younger I often worried that *Yizkor* needlessly reopened painful wounds which might best be left untouched. Experience has taught me that my worries were groundless. The tears our memories bring to our eyes are tears that help heal the wounds. To be sure, we ache for their return, to have what we had and can never have again; but remembering them brings us close again and reminds us of a truth we often overlook: that though death deprives us of another's physical

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presence it cannot take from us the precious essence of their being. Our dead remain active participants in our lives.

When we let our memories in, we hear again their loving admonitions: study; do; share; bind close the ties of love; take care of your brothers and sisters; be careful of the family's good name; let your word be your bond; live for others as well as yourself. It is, in fact, encouraging to hear again the words of tenderness and wisdom which brought so much grace to our lives, to touch again a beauty which thrilled our soul, to be awed by the courage they showed in the face of life's inevitable storms. At Creation, God created a single man and then decided that, "It is not good that man should be alone." So He created Eve to spare Adam the pain of loneliness and, the rabbis insisted, gave us at the same time the capacity we call memory so that even when death intrudes, we are not alone.

This service helps in other ways. One by one death strips us of those who are close. Much of grief's pain arises from our new found loneliness. *Yizkor* offers the touch and presence of others who have shed bitter tears. We are part of a community. Here, as one member of a community of sorrow, we learn, without having to be told, that we have not been singled out by some malign fate. All about us are men and women, parents and children, husbands and wives, who have built new lives, remarried, had other children, accepted new challenges and found that they could care and even exult. Some cultures buried the widow with the husband. Ours did not. Indeed, Judaism considers those who turn away from life and emotionally bury themselves alive as sinners for they are being ungrateful to God for the days and opportunities He continues to provide. In this respect *Yizkor* speaks to us a message which our dead would heartily approve: "Those who loved us and worked and prayed for our happiness would not be pleased to have us undo all their efforts by imprisoning ourselves in grief."

There is a wonderful Hindu tale of an inconsolable widow who went to a holy man in the hope that he would be able to resurrect her husband. The wise man listened and did not deny her request out of hand; rather, he told her: "Bring me three kernels of corn, each taken from a house which has never been visited by *Kali*, the goddess of death, and I will return your husband to you." She hastened away and went from house to house, knocking on door after door, but *Kali* had been everywhere before her. In time, the widow came to understand

the holy man's wisdom. We are mortals. Ultimately, we will lose those we love or they will lose us. That is the way of the world. That being so, is it not far better to have experienced the satisfactions and fulfillment of love than never to have loved at all. Not to have love is to consign ourselves to a narrow and bleak existence. To love is to pass beyond selfishness to service, beyond solitude to kinship, beyond fear to fulfillment.

Grief is a brooding emotion which turns us inward. When the pall of loneliness settles on our soul, we begin to look for ways, any way, to undo what cannot be undone; and some, in desperation and frustration, begin to think crazy thoughts. We half convince ourselves that they died because God wanted to punish us. I often hear a mourner say: "I didn't deserve this." Death is a fact of being, not a punishment. There are always words left unsaid. There are always needs to which we could not or did not respond. There are always feelings we could not express or reciprocate. After all, we are humans, not angels, and even if we were inconsiderate what kind of God would punish a parent for our failing? For most of us, guilt is an inappropriate response to death. What is done is done. What is appropriate is that we redouble our efforts to bind close the ties of family and share ourselves actively with others.

The rabbis told of a man who needed to cross a high mountain. The way was long. The weather was bitterly cold and he became weary. He struggled bravely against the attraction of sleep. He knew that if he gave in, death would swiftly follow. As he pulled himself along, his foot struck a heavy object. It proved to be a human body half buried in the snow. He immediately set about trying to rub some life back into the frozen man's limbs and that effort became his salvation. Warming another, he warmed himself.

Memories hold before us the essence of the one we loved. Death reduces to insignificance the trivial complaints which, in daily life, sometimes keep us from truly appreciating another's worth. At times such as this we see clearly the strength and courage which life requires of another, but we also tend to see our dead as larger than life, as paragons rather than humans. There are good people, fortunately many of them, but there are no saints. Our dead struggled with life's challenge just as we must. *Yizkor* reminds us not to say, "I will never be like" No two human beings are alike and our dead never asked us to match their accomplishments. The obligation of love should not yoke us to tasks be-

yond our capacities. We can only become what our circumstances and capacities allow us to become.

Yizkor also helps us to value the lasting influence of each individual life. The grave does not end influence. Indeed, *Yizkor* gives our grief a historical dimension and helps us see the role each of us plays in the grand pilgrimage of civilization. We recite with David the 23rd Psalm. We recite *Eleh Ezkerah*, a medieval eulogy to the martyrs of our people and, as we do, we are reminded of those who not only tried to live by their faith but who were forced by a cruel world to die for their faith, and their courage commands a commitment on our part to all the values they cherished.

Yizkor reminds us also that goodness is not buried in the grave. All that we do creates ripples which spread to the outer limits of time. No life ends if, to use the old rabbinic phrase, it has left life to the living. To live sensitively, to love another, to encourage a child, to calm those who are anxious, to feed the poor and house the needy and support justice for the outcast is to leave life to the living. The Bible uses a phrase to describe David's death which caught the attention of the sages: "and David slept with his fathers." Why, they wondered did the text not say simply, "David died"? They answered their own question. David was succeeded on the throne by Solomon who ruled as his father had ruled, with compassion and wisdom; so David was not really dead. He lived on because the son whose spirit he had helped to shape and mold continued in his way.

Grief is a challenge. Some give in to grief. Fearing to be hurt again, they pull away from human contact, but in doing so they lose the strengthening which comes from being caught up in life. Emotions wither. The spirit shrivels. We lessen ourselves. If I could add any prayer to the beautiful collection which comprises this service, it would be this. "Grant me O God the need to see the blessings that my sorrow brings. Give me in adversity, a heart that still can trust and sing." To have loved once does not mean that we cannot love again.

There is a time to weep and a time to dry our tears. In a few moments *Yizkor* will end and *Neilah*, the closing service of this great day, will begin. Soon we will return to our homes. There is a time to revive our memories and a time to set them aside and to live in the present, not in the past. May this *Yizkor* service help us to live so as to be worthy of our memories.

Daniel Jeremy Silver



THE TEMPLE YOUNG ASSOCIATES
FAMILY CAR RALLY & SCAVENGER HUNT
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1985

Detail to follow

Dissembling, saying one thing, meaning another,
is a familiar sin - and many believe that this sin can
be eliminated by an honest party - ACTING UP YOUR BELIEFS
ON THE SUBJECTS - ON THE SUBJECTS, ON THE SUBJECTS, ON THE SUBJECTS
produced at Versailles, in 1664 to be a representative and
included the Cardinal, Leclerc, Leclerc, & France. They said not
actual music ^{APPROX} he had NOT SATURATED RELIGION, but
its counterfeit. In fact, he ^{MILTON'S PLACES} was a man in the play
STONAS TA was CONSCIOUS MAN WHO SPEAKS LIKE WILL INSIDE THAT A LIFE

PR. VIRTUS + PRO...
 IS R₁₆ IN FACT SO? + S. PIETY AS MOTHER OF VIRTUS? TRUTH
 Theology of Virtue... of love

TO REVIEW THE STATE OF THE
~~THE~~ - The men we put you
 & great success
been carried by men of honesty & loyalty. The gunner who
 began to TWO men in June & held 20 of all your
 in Salmon for a week more men of the Hundred - No
Part of land. There is more is needed than 5 hills
 of the land is needed than 5 hills

Part of law - There is a - reason
legislation - Indeed, the effects of the 1955 law are negative
 for the reduction of the length of the trial - prosecution not prosecution
SUBSTANTIATE PROSECUTION AND MURDER IS A VIRTUE?
 many more more - same
 to be held

He has not been very much - Sick
 people humiliated himself & he ~~follows~~ in the ~~bold~~
 the ~~under-junks~~
 Terrors of AMERICA as part of his ~~conscience~~ ~~total~~ ~~total~~
 mental ~~be~~ ~~purge~~ ~~teamed~~ with a Sick Theory -
 JANNAIR ~~Behind~~ ~~annals~~ ~~promote~~ both ~~LOYALTY~~ ~~ATTN~~ ~~REMOVED~~

A CHURCH - the old in Jerusalem. "IT IS A religious duty to
SEND OPPONENTS TO HELL" - again we found the same truth
that honesty is not blatant unlike - - as a
most of us are troubled by the sad fact that so many
consider for a moment of conscience their unethical
competition - and in the honest act as seen can be led -
to act as if they were holy unlike the FRODO Baggins

AND NO TOXICITY and glorious some power - The
side of the party loyalty that you claim to see depends
on whether you sympathize with or oppose his actions
DO THE honesty of our CONSTITUTION guarantee to
enter your action ? The agitated themselves to a

learned & committed under conclusion - what to do or to be
look not at us as blatant unlike the same truth, but a
blend of religion and politics - as 57 years ago when after
being forced to resist to his own religion and politics
with pride of mission and as the blend of an

unfamiliar fact which must be understood and accepted
in order to be able to enter the same into the field.

The same idea which was shared by many at the time
first produced it as but King Robert must be
unfamiliar unlike the same truth which must be
with lead to unlike - The Refugees but played
Europe to disappear as - to fully say in the same
to Refugees - There was partial refugees was
essentially not of unlike - The fact that we were
seem to be unlike, of countries mis taken,

was some little to be analyzed - change - as if the results
 showed quite a new - factor, quality, level
you found - many revisions, needs, pulls - also needed
 to reappear - and a revising a last one revising
was not just done on an evening - described to
create a movement internal edges would play and
role - to be in the world, concerns to be
a subject - a distinction - a material just a subject,
concerns, distinctions, how a child can be revised
child - material be learning of action 4 potential
media, material the learning of improvement, material
of potential contribution to the in quality and subject

a new intended step

WRHS



well-known not just the idea of the subject
given in lecture, not just the idea of the subject
any more can be done in the subject - just is
a universal
a subject, not just the idea of the subject
along the line of the subject just the idea of the subject
pulls 4 idea of the subject - not just the idea of the subject
moving - not just the idea of the subject - not just the idea of the subject
are used as signified to the purpose of conclusion
The subject is not just the idea of the subject - not just the idea of the subject
are not just the idea of the subject - not just the idea of the subject
sign 1 7 10 6 - purpose of hope - subject research
sign 1 7 10 6 - purpose of hope - subject research

Common.

[illegible]

So we read after full. confusion of what we were
in " " later - over considered to be million of the time -
100 million of expenses

There are two sides - Full of ... (Camp)
Heavy ... are line values - many are total
compared - On ... for ... - to have ...
- a hand out in later - Committed & Fairer



1985 Announcements

Rosh Hashanah Morning - September 16, 1985

BRANCH

A Children's Service will be held today at the Main Temple only at 2:15 P.M. Parents are requested to sit with their children. A pre-school experience for children ages four to six will be held in the Social Hall of The Temple at the same time. parents are asked to bring pre-schoolers to the Social Hall to leave them with our staff. After the Children's Service in the Main Temple they may be picked up at the Social Hall.

THOSE WHO WISH THE NAMES OF THOSE IN THEIR FAMILIES WHO DIED DURING THE LAST TWELVE MONTHS mentioned during the Memorial Service on Yom Kippur are requested to submit the names to The Temple office before Friday, September 20.

The entire congregation will gather for the afternoon services of Yom Kippur in the sanctuary of the Main Temple. Please bring your ticket with you to insure admission to the Main Temple.

The Temple's new Sabbath morning program, A Sabbath Celebration, will begin on Saturday, September 21, at 9:30 at The Temple Branch. Rabbi Susan Berman will lead this hour of study, worship and celebration.