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*"Market in Meah Shearim" by Svi Raphaely*

Gleanings From  
Israel's Press

The Credo of  
A Scientist

An Open Letter  
To Arthur Goldberg

Reflections on  
Jewish Education

"Orthodox Modernism"  
— An Exchange

# THE JEWISH OBSERVER

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### the cover

"Market in Meah Shearim" by Svi Raphaely, an Israeli yeshiva student and artist whose work has been warmly praised throughout the world.

# THE CREDO OF A SCIENTIST

DR. SYLVAN SHANE is an anesthesiologist and has published six volumes and twenty-two articles in his field. Dr. Shane serves on the staff of Maryland General Hospital, Sinai Hospital, and others in Baltimore, Maryland, where he lives with his family in a home built with his own hands. He has traveled widely and lectured on new medical techniques which he has developed. He serves on various boards of Orthodox educational institutions, and was recently a candidate for the Congress of the United States. The following is an extract from an unpublished manuscript titled "Why I Am an Orthodox Jew," which expresses Dr. Shane's credo as a scientist and as a Jew. □

AS A SCIENTIST, I BELIEVE in miracles. A miracle is an effect in the physical world which surpasses all known human or natural powers and is therefore ascribed to a supernatural agency. But my belief in miracles goes beyond that of other men—I believe in the greatest of all miracles: The Revelation of the Torah to the Jewish people.

The origin of life was and always remains a miracle. The origin of the universe with its stars and planets, and its inexorable mathematical precision, is a miracle. The fact that the oxygen concentration of the atmosphere remains approximately fixed and nearly constant in anticipation of the respiratory needs of generations of man, and animals and of insects, yet unborn, is a miracle. The almost unvarying intensity of the sun, the periodicity of rain, the regularity of the revolution of the earth, the precision of the moon's orbit and the very fact of human thought are all miracles, are all beyond and above human comprehension. That a mass of physical and chemical energy can think, can plan and construct the Golden Gate Bridge, a computer, or send a rocket to the moon is a miracle.

I have studied the human body, including the brain. I have studied physiology and chemistry and bacteriology. And the more I learn, the more convinced I become of the miracle of life and the Divine creation of the universe.

How is it possible that at a certain fixed moment in the development of the embryo, one cell divides into two which differ from the original cell in structure and function. From the original two cells which united there

suddenly appear cells which become bone, others muscle, others nerve fibers. The process goes on day after day, year after year, and as far as the human mind can comprehend, continues along according to everlasting and eternal rules.

THOSE WHO HAVE HAD the opportunity to study the process of human reproduction realize the miraculous perfection and precision of the plan by which it operates. Every one of the thousands of particles which participate in the building of a cell must be on the exact spot at the exact moment. Otherwise no co-operation of all these parts would be possible. Otherwise there would be no life. Every one of the billions of cells in the organically sound human body performs its task truly and exactly.

This is only a small part of the cytology we see in nature. All her physical, astronomical and chemical properties are designed to make life possible. They not only make life possible for one biological type, but for all the thousands of different species of plants and animals as well as for man from the Canadian Arctic to the African jungle and from the shores of the Amazon to the highest peaks of the Himalayas.

Miracles are real but they are not scientifically permissible concepts; they cannot be measured. The exact sciences imply precise measurement. We cannot measure thought; we can never know or measure the force which impels the sperm to the egg, causes it to unite, divide and metamorphose into a human creature which thinks, loves, learns to comprehend justice and appreciate beauty.

Beauty is also very real and meaningful when considered in the framework of aesthetics. It is meaningless in the framework of natural science since it is impossible to measure beauty. We may approximate beauty by various physical criteria, but to know exactly what beauty is, we must work within the non-science framework of aesthetics.

When the statement is made that G-d created the world, this is meaningful only within the framework of the Torah, but meaningless in science, (just as beauty is meaningless in science) and thus cannot contradict science. Creation is a scientifically meaningless concept. The account of Creation in the Torah

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*“The giving of the law at Sinai was a miracle experienced by over a half million people who later told it to their children, who in turn told it to their children, who in turn told it to theirs, and my grandfather told it to my father and my father told it to me and I have told it to my children, and they will relate it to their children and so it will be retold through the centuries for all generations.”*

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must be understood to be completely allegorical and irrational from the scientific standpoint. This can be proved formally as follows: according to the Torah, G-d created everything including time and the laws of science. It is meaningless to speak of the creation of scientific laws in terms of scientific laws.

When science says that the world is very old or infinitely old, it does not contradict the Torah, because science assumes that scientific laws always were valid. The proposition that scientific laws have always been valid cannot be proved by scientific measurements, and so is neither true nor false in science. A statement which is neither true nor false, cannot contradict *anything* and it cannot contradict the Torah. One can believe in and accept both the Torah and science simultaneously, and this I believe and accept.

People who speak of the age of the world refer to the scientific concept of time. In our Torah, time has quite a different meaning. Since G-d also created time, he is not *of* time, and does not exist within the framework of time. The human mind cannot possibly conceive of the nothingness preceding existence, nor can it comprehend true eternity, which is not simply never-ending time, but rather the status of complete freedom from time and thus outside its categories of beginning and end, past, present and future.

Confusion arises in people's minds because they tend to equate truth in science with truth in Torah. They forget how these truths were arrived at—one as a consequence of man-made theories which explain experimental and observational facts, the other as a result of prophesy, belief and tradition. Some scientists extend scientific concepts beyond their range of validity, or give scientific meaning to concepts of Torah such as creation, which are meaningless in a scientific framework. They then attempt to demonstrate that science disproves the Torah. These conclusions are false. The Torah is not and cannot be contradicted by science.

ALL THAT IS TOLD in the Torah of our forefathers Avraham, Yitzchok and Yaakov, is so inextricably interwoven with supernaturalism, or miracles, that it is impossible to remove this element without destroying the entire description. If we try to eliminate all supernaturalism from these descriptions, what we have left

is a tale of some Hebrew nomads or bedouins who travelled about in the desert between Mesopotamia and Egypt. After we have deprived the historical experiences of our Fathers of all supernaturalism and of the metaphysical relationship with a transcendental Personal Being, we have degraded them to roaming and fighting nomads.

The Torah was not given to Moshe by G-d in secret. The Torah was given to the Jewish people in full view and within hearing range of approximately half a million human beings who stood at the foot of Mt. Sinai and saw with their own eyes and heard the miracle with their own ears. The giving of this Torah to mankind was a personal experience, a miracle—which has no relation to science and cannot be explained by science. The parting of the Red Sea when the Jews escaped needs no meteorological explanation regarding low tides and droughts. It was a miracle performed in full view and experienced by our fathers and the Egyptians. So were the plagues on Egypt. Attempted scientific explanations and theories regarding these phenomena are therefore without validity, and of no value.

The giving of the law at Sinai was a miracle experienced by over a half million people who later told it to their children, who in turn told it to their children, who in turn told it to theirs, and my grandfather told it to my father and my father told it to me and I have told it to my children, and they will relate it to their children and so it will be retold through the centuries for all generations. At no time in all of world history were there less than several million Jews faithfully maintaining this tradition of Orthodox Jewish practice as commanded at Sinai by G-d. It is also a fact that at no time in Jewish history was there a break in the chain of Jewish tradition from Sinai down to the present day. This makes this event the most authenticated of all historical events in human history.

Since G-d created the universe and man to inhabit the earth it was a natural consequence for G-d to give man a code by which to govern himself. Man does not have the innate ability to know right from wrong. He is not a naturally moral and ethical person because he was also created with the ability to choose freely between good and evil. He was created with a free will.

Man must be taught moral and ethical laws and the laws must have behind them an authority above and beyond man. Without authority they are meaningless and as changeable as the wind. This authority is G-d, the Creator of man, and the Creator of the moral and ethical law, which is embodied in the Torah.

It is quite simple and not at all confusing for me to accept the miracle of the giving of the Torah at Mt. Sinai. This miracle is certainly simpler to comprehend than the unexplained existence of the gases of the atmosphere; the sun with its complex nuclear reactions; the internal thermostat which regulates body temperature at a constant of 98.6 degrees regardless of the surrounding atmosphere; the mechanism which causes blood to clot after the skin is incised; the formation of red blood cells with their highly complex chemistry which holds oxygen in combination with hemoglobin in the arterial direction and carbon dioxide in another loose combination in the venous direction until it discharges from the lungs into the atmosphere for the trees and plants to convert it again, by the complex chemistry of photosynthesis, into oxygen. The life of man is therefore directly dependent on plants and animals. To attribute the simple act of awakening in the morning, or the physio-chemical phenomenon

which attracts male to female—to attribute this to ‘nature’ or to a natural phenomenon which someday we will be able to duplicate in a test tube (“just give us time”) is like attributing a Shakespearean sonnet to pen and ink and paper which simply assembled various chemicals into a sonnet without a brain working behind the pen. Or like attributing the beauty of the Pyramids or the United Nations building in New York City to a pile of bricks and blocks which simply assembled themselves into the building without a brain to guide the assembly.

Science and so-called higher Biblical criticism would have us believe that we are here because of an accidental explosion of gases somewhere in outer space which, after cooling off, assembled their electrons into the world of trees, plants, insects and man. Since the experience of my forefathers was eye-witnessed at Sinai, it is more intelligent for me to accept *this* fact, than the ethereal conjectures of so-called men of science who prefer to believe in mirages of exploding gases rather than the eye-witnessed miracles of the Creator of the universe.

I believe, not because I am a scientist, but because I am a Jew. And I am a Jew—because I believe. □

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## “The Right to Dissent”

### *An Open Letter to Ambassador Arthur Goldberg*

*Dear Mr. Ambassador:*

*As a Jew loyal to Torah, its teachings, and its teachers, I could not participate in the 40th Anniversary Dinner of the Synagogue Council of America. But, as a journalist, with an abiding interest in all matters of Jewish concern, I felt the need to observe, to listen.*

*I heard ideas expressed which I could agree with, others that were disturbing. As an American I was proud to hear you speak in clear and uncompromising words of the right to dissent. THE NEW YORK TIMES properly saw your statement as the ‘story’ of the evening; their report was headed, GOLDBERG BACKS RIGHT OF DISSENT, and the opening paragraphs read:*

*Arthur J. Goldberg upheld last night the right of dissent from the Government’s foreign policy and said such dissent “can only benefit” that policy. The United States Representative to the United Nations said: “Free debate and discussion obviously must be keynotes of that policy, and the right to participate in them must not be limited only to voices that agree.”*

*“The price of our freedom . . . includes that of criticizing our elected officials and of disagreeing with their policies—and I should add, those of our appointed officials, also.”*

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Mr. Goldberg, your words rang true and clear, but they struck me as being in contradiction to other words spoken that evening: The chairman, in hailing the historic import of the dinner, noted that the bulk of the American Jewish religious community was represented, except for "a few dissidents who want to rock the boat." You should know, Mr. Ambassador, that the leaders who were so abruptly dismissed as "a few dissidents" represent the vast majority of Orthodox rabbis and religious laymen who are firmly committed to the belief that the blurring of boundaries which is inherent in the structure of the Synagogue Council threatens the integrity of the Jewish people as the people of the Torah. We are not here concerned with arguing our position, nor is it our purpose to convert you to that position—though our heart goes out to you as a fellow Jew and you would be most welcome in our camp. But, we are here concerned with an attitude best described by the Hebrew word BITUL (negation), which was apparent at the dinner from the start as evidenced by the reference to the "few dissidents who want to rock the boat."

The war in Viet-Nam, Mr. Ambassador, is a crucial issue, far above the political level to which it descended during the recent election campaigns. You live with this problem during all your waking hours; I suspect it cuts into your sleeping hours as well. There are loyal Americans who dissent from our government's policy out of deep concern for America as much as for the suffering people of Viet-Nam. This dissent is a heavy burden for you to carry; but you describe it as "the price of our freedom." And you deemed it proper to leave your post at the United Nations to tell the American people, as you have in the past, that the right to dissent must forever be upheld in our nation, and that such dissent "can only benefit" our nation.

The leaders of Orthodox Jewry who dissent from the position which is inherent in Orthodox participation in the Synagogue Council of America, are, of course, 'dissenters,' by definition, but they are not "few," nor is it their desire to "rock the boat" which carries American Jewry. They believe that the Orthodox members of the SCA dissent from Orthodox tradition. Surely you would not deny THEM the right to dissent; surely you would deem their dissent of benefit to American Jewry at least in the same sense that dissenters from your government's policy in Viet-Nam "can only benefit" that policy.

You noted, Mr. Goldberg, that Jewry is lagging behind in the area of 'ecumenism.' As one who is a daily contender in the arena of world affairs, you know that words can have different, even opposite meanings. When the word 'democracy' is spoken in the councils of the United Nations the listener must be aware of who has spoken the word if he is to understand its intended meaning. The word 'ecumenism' presents just such a trap: Its meaning is largely dependent on who uses it. For decades it appeared only in the vocabulary of American Protestants. More recently it has been more widely used by the Roman Catholic Church. Yet, there is sharp disagreement BETWEEN the various churches, and WITHIN the various churches, as to the meaning and the goals of 'ecumenism.' To take this word with all of its ambiguity, and to artificially inject it into the forum of American Jewry creates nothing but confusion.

Mr. Ambassador, you once said that the things which unite us as Jews are more important than the things which divide us. A reading of the history of Jewish martyrdom indicates the contrary.

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DR. SAMUEL BELKIN, in accepting the honor bestowed upon him, called for a re-evaluation of "the position of the Synagogue Council in the life of the American Jewish community." He took exception to the characterization of the dinner by the press, as a symbol of "the ecumenical spirit of the contemporary Jewish community." "We as Jews" Dr. Belkin declared, "have been ecumenical . . . that is universalists . . . from our earliest beginning." We can understand Dr. Belkin's chagrin at the use of the term 'ecumenical spirit,' particularly in the light of the criticism leveled at him from Orthodox circles. It appeared to me, that much that Dr. Belkin said that evening would not have been said—since his criticism of Reform and Conservatism might have been thought to be in poor taste—were it not for the outcry which greeted his acceptance of the SCA invitation. But Dr. Belkin, as a classical scholar (he earned his doctorate in that field) glossed over the problem of 'ecumenism' in an unscholarly manner. He used the word in its original sense, from the Greek OIKOUMENE, meaning: 'the inhabited world,' and as an adjective: universal. Whatever 'ecumenical' means TODAY it is rarely used in the sense in which Dr. Belkin used it.

But, as a Jew, and as an American, I found more disturbing than a semantic error, Dr. Belkin's statement of his philosophy as an Orthodox Jew.

I shall define to you my philosophy as an Orthodox Jew by merely quoting two sentences from the Book of Leviticus from the chapter commonly called The Code of Holiness.

"Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart.

Thou shalt surely rebuke thy neighbor and not bear sin because of him.

Thou shalt not take vengeance nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people.

But thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself . . ."

Mind you, think of the beauty of the juxtaposition: Thou shalt not hate thy kinsman in thy heart but thou shalt surely rebuke thy neighbor . . . Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. My friends, we do not hate any Jew in our hearts. We love our neighbors regardless of whether they are Jews or non-Jews. But love without a commitment, without a responsibility, without demands it becomes a meaningless and an empty phrase. You cannot love your country without your willingness to fight for its security and share in its defense. As an Orthodox Jew I have no hatred for any Jew whether he is observant or non-observant. I have the deepest affection for my fellow co-religionist. But when necessary we shall at all times rebuke, demand, reprove and above all plead for a maximum Jewish education, for a greater Jewish consciousness, for better talmud torahs. For more day schools and yeshivot, for more Torah learning and greater Torah practice.

But never in the spirit of hatred, vengeance or grudges, but in the spirit of genuine love and affection.

Mr. Ambassador, as I listened to those words I was hurt and offended. It would not be within the scope of this letter to discuss all the implications of this statement, but it would be an injustice to let pass without comment the sentence: "But never in the spirit of hatred, vengeance or grudges, but in the spirit of genuine love and affection," an obvious reference to the Orthodox 'dissenters.'

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To impute to outstanding Torah scholars motives of "hatred, vengeance or grudge" is to carry on dissent in a most un-American manner, apart from the Jewish ethical considerations.

To declare that "as an Orthodox Jew I have no HATRED for any Jew whether he is observant or non-observant," introduces a word into the discussion which has not previously been used by any Orthodox group, regardless of the intensity of its commitment or its disapproval of the SCA.

I pray, Mr. Ambassador that your efforts for peace for all mankind will be blessed. I pray too, that the hearts of all Jews will be drawn closer together until we reach the closeness which bound us all together when we stood together at Sinai. Until that time, we need not compromise our love for all Jews, nor need we compromise the right to dissent.

Most respectfully yours,

YAAKOV JACOBS

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Joseph Elias

# Reflections on the Jewish Educational Scene

## *A Review of Some Recent Publications in the Field*

### I

A COLLECTION of essays on *Judaism and the Jewish School*, published by Bloch Publishing Company for the American Association for Jewish Education,<sup>1</sup> cannot but bring to mind George Bernard Shaw's barbed remark, "He who can, does; he who can't, teaches," and someone's even more cynical addition, "and he who can't teach, writes books on education." As a teacher, I cannot very well agree that these observations are *always* true; but the book before us shows that there is *some* validity to them.

The American Jewish educational scene, by and large, is a wasteland. Vast sums of money are spent by a number of national agencies with imposing names, by local welfare funds and a large variety of different educational institutions, and the results have been utterly disappointing even to their sponsors—a stream "a mile wide and an inch deep," in the words of a prominent member of the American Jewish establishment. The *National Study of Jewish Education*, sponsored by the American Association for Jewish Educa-

tion (AAJE), reported in 1959 that the "educational shallowness" of American Jewish schools made a re-statement of educational objectives a critical necessity. *Presto*, yet another institution with a high-sounding title was set up by the AAJE—the *National Curriculum Research Institute*—and its discussions indicated the need for "bringing together the best available formulations of Jewish educational thought in America" (p. VIII), to this objective the present volume is dedicated. And what does it offer us? The same arid formulations by the same men who are so prominently identified with the failure of American Jewish education up to now.

There are, of course, some oases in the wasteland described: the Yeshivos and Beth Jacob Schools, Me-sivtos and Kollelim, that have sprung up in the last fifty years to serve as the agencies of Torah education in the community. They have succeeded in large measure in attracting, holding, and molding their students. Apparently, Torah educators have at least some of the answers to the frustrating problems of Jewish education in America. We would expect that the *National Curriculum Research Institute*, which emphasizes the "gravity of the situation," would be interested in the views of Orthodox educators, and we are not disap-

1. *Judaism and the Jewish Schools*, selected essays on the direction and purpose of Jewish education, edited by J. Pilch and M. Ben-Horin (New York, 1966; Bloch Publ. Co.).



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*"A perplexing question must be faced at this point: Why do the men heading the American Jewish educational establishment fail to recognize the bankruptcy of their efforts, and to draw the proper conclusions from it? After all, the evidence of their failure is known to them — in fact, a good deal of it has emerged from their own surveys and studies."*

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pointed—not totally, at least. Among the forty-five writers presented in the present volume, *four* Orthodox spokesmen have been included! One could well question whether, say, the founder and headmaster of the Ramaz School and the author of *Jewish Values for Modern Man* should be considered the spokesmen for Torah education in America. But even after conceding this point to the editors we are left with four, just four, representatives of Orthodoxy. Out of nine sections *one*, out of 336 pages in this volume a total of 28 have been devoted to the only flourishing sector in American Jewish education!<sup>2</sup> It almost seems as if there were indeed a careful division of functions: there are those men who staff the AAJE, the National Council for Jewish Education, the National Culture Foundation, the Bureaus of Jewish Education, and the Colleges of Jewish Studies, and do the philosophizing and writing about Jewish education—and there are those others who furnish Jewish education, in the true sense of the word, devotedly and effectively, despite the immense handicaps put in their way.

A recent book on the Day School,<sup>3</sup> of which more will be said later, spells out this fact very clearly. It points out how the overwhelming success of the *Yeshivah* movement has changed the minds of some former strong opponents such as Dr. Isaac Berkson who declared in 1964: "We need the intensive Orthodox Jewish Day Schools—the yeshivot—with their religious and educational intensity. We need them, realizing full well that many of them do not make accommodations. They need not make accommodations. We need their strong conviction and commitment. They are going to persist and they should persist" (quoted on pp. 161-2). But at the same time, the book points out the generally "unsympathetic attitude of the non-traditional Jewish educators to the Jewish Day School . . . an outstanding proponent of the communal school idea in Jewish education, speaking on the developments in American Jewish education between 1940 and 1960 at the 18th annual pedagogic conference of the Jewish Education Committee of New York, held in 1960, made no men-

2. It is interesting to note that a volume, *Modern Jewish Educational Thought*, published by the Chicago College of Jewish Studies in 1965, contains sixteen selections, *not one of them from an author connected with Torah education.*

3. *The Jewish Day School in America*, by Alvin I. Schiff (New York, 1966; Jewish Education Committee Press, \$5.00).

tion whatsoever of the Jewish Day School. The lack of acceptance of this institution by some Jewish educators has not always been passive . . . [their] opposition has undoubtedly had a negative effect on organized communal support of all-day education. Thus the lack of greater financial assistance for the day school, in some cases and some measure, may be attributed to the local bureaus whose professional staffs often could not reconcile themselves to the idea of a traditional educational institution" (p. 207). The most glaring example of the lack of understanding that the establishment has for *Yeshivah* education is the recommendation of the AAJE that, instead of seeking Federal aid, *Day Schools send their pupils to the public schools till 2 P.M. and devote the later afternoon to Hebrew studies*—this from the agency that claims to be the national champion of Jewish education!<sup>4</sup>

A PERPLEXING question must be faced at this point: Why do the men heading the American Jewish educational establishment fail to recognize the bankruptcy of their efforts, and to draw the proper conclusions from it? After all, the evidence of their failure is known to them—in fact, a good deal of it has emerged from their own surveys and studies. Here are some extracts from the above-mentioned National Study:<sup>4a</sup>

. . . *how meagre is the knowledge that can be*

4. The minutes of the meeting of August 28, 1966, of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies, contains this interesting and relevant report: "The question of day schools was discussed by the World Council on Jewish Education and given marked priority. It was felt that day schools was the method to be employed to make Jewish education effective in the various communities. . . . On the other hand, the Americans prefer the afternoon schools. They reminded the conference that the afternoon schools had always been a very effective factor in Jewish education."

It is remarkable—and would be funny if it were not so ludicrous—that the AAJE, which represents this approach, considers itself the proper agency to conduct an evaluation of the Day School movement "under exclusive AAJE auspices in accordance with accepted 'scientific principles'" (I. Toubin, *Pedagogical Reporter*, September 1966). As Dr. Joseph Kamnitsky's reply points out, the very placing of the Day School in the dock—in the face of the devastating disclosures of the *National Survey about Talmud Torahs and Sunday Schools*—shows the prejudice of those who made the suggestion. Certainly the AAJE has neither impartiality, nor indeed any understanding for the meaning of Torah education.

4a. *Jewish Education in the United States*, vol. I, by A. M. Dushkin and U. Z. Engelman, 1959.

achieved by our children in Bible and Hebrew and in the other subjects of the curriculum, and how inadequate is the sense of achievement of the children and parents (p. 217).

*Excluding the Day schools, . . . probably not more than 25% of our children (receiving Jewish education) learn enough Hebrew to be able to begin the study of the Hebrew Bible, even in simplified texts . . . the likelihood is that the vast majority of our children grow up without any knowledge of Bible text, either in Hebrew or in English (p. 189).*

The National Study emphasizes that a majority of the pupils do not indicate a liking for, or enjoyment of, their Jewish school activities.

*It would seem that in well conducted schools the proportion of children who enjoy or like their studies and activities should be considerable higher (p. 215). It would seem that the children in the Orthodox schools have more positive attitudes towards their schools and studies than do the children in other schools (p. 78).*

The report emphasizes the failure of schools to retain their students: the average afternoon school pupil leaves after about three years, in two-thirds of the cases because of Bar Mitzvah and lack of interest of child and parent.<sup>4b</sup> In the circumstances it is small wonder that our teen-agers grow up bereft of all Jewish involvement. The tragic alienation of our college youth is well known and documented; but perhaps even more significant are the results of a survey of a random sample drawn from 2,000 adolescent members of the Bnai Brith Youth Organization, youngsters—in other words—who have actual ties with the Jewish community. This survey (as reported in 1956 by JTA) questioned them about their interest in nine types of activities; among boys “Jewish content” activities took last place, among girls last but one. In listing community service activities, the youngsters rated “soliciting pledges for the UJA” at the bottom of their lists.

But there is actually no need to quote statistics; which can be endlessly duplicated; the realities of Jewish community life speak loud and clear. Why, then, is there no heart-searching among those who carry responsibility? The answer is tragically simple: *if the dominant groups in American Jewry, their lay leaders and their professionals, were to put aside their prejudices and rationalizations and acknowledged the unique power of Torah education, they would be forced*

4b. The preliminary report (1959) on the Detroit pilot study provides further detail: “over one-third of the responding children liked their weekday and Sunday schools little or not at all. . . . The Orthodox seem to indicate a more intensely positive feeling . . .” (pp. 5-6). Again, “the children in the sample were discriminating in their attitude toward the curriculum . . . The children in the Orthodox subsample were the most positive . . .” (p.8). “Less than one-third of the weekday children and only 10% of the Sunday school children stated they would continue after Bar Mitzvah” (p. 13).

*to draw certain further conclusions that reach far beyond the field of education*—serious doubts about the validity of the non-Torah approaches to Judaism and, ultimately, about their own personal non-Torah ways of life and thought. There are some individuals today who have reached these conclusions and have acted on them—but not the men who are supposed to furnish educational leadership for the American Jewish community. They do not cling to the afternoon-school idea merely because, admittedly, there are large segments of American Jewry who are completely unprepared for the Yeshivah concept; they do not throw all their efforts into curriculum development, textbooks and all other aspects of the afternoon school, merely to make it a stepping stone to intense and inspired Torah education. If these were their motives and guiding principles, we could muster a great deal of understanding for their work—but, alas, they are unfortunately not at all willing to recognize the inescapable necessity of Jewish education to the Torah education. Thus, in the words of Avrohom Ibn Ezra’s Shabbos hymn, “the maidservant says to the true mistress, ‘no, thy son is dead and mine liveth.’” The living lesson offered by American Torah education is rejected while educators cling to decrepit formulae so admirably classified in *Judaism and the Jewish School: Communal-Hebraic-Progressive, Hebraic-Essentialist, Cultural-Progressive, Yiddish-Progressive, Communal-Hebraic-Reconstructionist, Conservative, Reform*. Truly, as the Prophet has it, “they have forsaken me, the well of fresh water, to dig for themselves broken cisterns that do not hold the water.”

The adherence to the pseudo-scientific formulae of some of the modern social scientists and the disregard for the living essence of the People of the Torah, as it is revealed in its history, is shown in the excessive preoccupation with the minutiae of educational techniques which pervades so many current Jewish educational publications. More significant still, even when efforts are made to explore our past, they do not penetrate to its real meaning but remain concerned with externals and remain unproductive. The Jewish Education Committee of New York found it appropriate recently to republish *The Jewish School, an Introduction to the History of Jewish Education*.<sup>5</sup> The entire volume reflects the author’s evolutionary approach to Judaism, his acceptance of the theories of multiple composition of the *Chumash*, and of the Pharisees as the innovators of the Oral Law. Thus he declares: “The paradise story . . . reflects the mood of an age, in the remote past, when education, learning of any kind beyond that needed in the simple life of the primitive peasant, was regarded as suspect, even harmful” (p. 7). And Dr. Morris informs the reader—presumably a

5. By Dr. N. Morris (New York, 1964; J.E.C. Press, \$3.50), originally issued in London in 1937.

future Hebrew teacher—that in early biblical times “the greater the [father’s] love, the more acceptable the [child] sacrifice and the more efficacious in gaining the favor . . . of some powerful but cruel god. *This is the implication of the well-known story of the Binding of Isaac.* His escape in the nick of time was, it would seem, at least partly due to the circumstance of his being an only son” (p. 208, my italics).

WITH SUCH AN APPROACH to the *Chumash*, which completely negates its divinity and spiritual message, Dr. Morris obviously cannot discern in Jewish history and traditions the profound inner spark which has given them vitality. His elaborate and comprehensive survey of Talmudic references to Jewish education thus remains at best a competent dissection of a corpse. Given the author’s premises, his book becomes of mere antiquarian concern; we may be interested in learning something about the ancient manner of memorizing or translating, and we may even admire some of the old techniques, but we will not be able to gain a deeper understanding of Jewish education for our age. In his introduction, Dr. Morris expresses his view that “the survival of the Jew under conditions of unparalleled adversity” is neither a riddle nor a mystery but “mainly the result of a successful system of education” (p. XXVI). I am afraid that the reader of his book, while he may be impressed with a few features of ancient Jewish education, will hardly understand how it could account for Jewish survival. What gave Jewish education its meaning and impact was the very point the anti-traditional educator fails to understand: *the revelation and acceptance of the Torah at Sinai, and the daily reliving of this overpowering experience by the child.*<sup>6</sup> It is ultimately this experience which furnishes the Jew with a basis for integrating his self with the forces which he encounters in the world, intellectually as well as psychically, through commitment to the will of G-d, who is at the same time his Father and the Master of the universe.

## II

IT IS IMPORTANT TO BE very emphatic about this point, for it marks the difference between the living force of Torah education and the ineffective surrogates offered in its place—neither curriculum, nor methods, nor language of instruction, nor even a day-school-type program make the difference *per se*. This is not to belittle the importance of these and other factors—but they are only meaningful in the context of a full commitment to G-d and Torah. This has not always been clearly understood, even in traditional circles. Because the Day

6. Compare the Talmudic passage (*Kiddushin*, 30a) which likens the instruction of one’s children to a daily renewed “standing at Sinai,” and the Talmudic injunction that the Torah must be studied in the same spirit of awe, fear and trembling, in which it was received at Sinai. (*Berachos*, 22a)

School is obviously the only school form permitting maximal Torah study; because most day schools have been created under Torah auspices; and because Orthodoxy has had to carry on the battle for recognition of the day schools, there has been a tendency unthinkingly to identify the progress of the Day School movement with the progress of Torah education. This is unfortunately not correct; there can be, and unfortunately are, institutions which are patterned on the Day School model and yet lack the spirit and orientation which characterize the living Torah institution. For illustration, we need only turn once more to Dr. Alvin Schiff’s survey of the Day School in America.

It is an extremely well-written work, containing a wealth of information never before assembled in one place. Anybody concerned with the Day School in its educational, fiscal, or communal aspects, will find this book of great value. At the same time, it has limitations. Most of these seem to me to stem from the fact that the author’s associations have been essentially with Yeshiva University and with the Jewish Education Committee which published the book.<sup>7</sup> But more serious than any of these shortcomings, important though it is to note them, is the author’s treatment of the Day Schools as essentially *one* movement. He distinguishes the various types, ranging all the way from Chassidic to Solomon Schechter schools, but they all share in the accolade given to the Day School cause as “the surest method of insuring American Jewry’s creative continuity” (p. 249). He notes the spread of the Conservative day schools—and the increasing agitation for Reform schools—and poses the fiscal and enrolment

7. Dr. Schiff is more than explicit about the contributions of these institutions to the Day School cause, but does not do justice to the uniqueness of the role played by, say, Rabbi Mendlowitz and his followers, by the Torah Vodaath network of institutions, or by Lakewood and its five satellite Mesivtos; none of these are dealt with correctly and adequately. This may simply be the result of the author’s being insufficiently acquainted with the *wider* yeshiva scene (thus, for example, he lists as a recently founded teacher training institution the Esther Schonfeld Teachers Seminary, which is associated with the JEC, but does not seem to know about the Yavneh Seminary in Cleveland and the Rika Breuer Seminary in New York). More serious is the way in which the author’s associations have affected his approach to basic Day School issues. He hedges on the crucial question of Federal Aid; while choosing to remain silent on the violent and destructive opposition of the AAJE (of which the JEC is a constituent agency), he gives the impression that *Orthodoxy* is profoundly divided on the issue, and concludes that greater help by Jewish Welfare Funds is the best solution—as if this were a solution generally agreed to be preferable. On the role of the JEC in the Day School movement he gives the impression that Torah Umesorah works nationally while the JEC is *the* accepted local agency for New York schools, and he mentions only one instance of a Yeshiva refusing to cooperate with the JEC on ideological grounds; the profound ideological reservations existing in actual fact have been highlighted—presumably since Dr. Schiff’s manuscript was completed—by the formal decision of *most* New York Yeshivos to be represented even locally in all matters except the ongoing lunch program only by Torah Umesorah and not the JEC. Similarly, the book contains no reference to Torah Umesorah’s teacher licensing system, which is not recognized by the JEC.

problems of competing schools in small communities. But obviously there is more involved here than just technical problems. There is a vital need for drawing a clear distinction between Torah institutions on one hand and schools, on the other hand, which merely represent a more effective propagation of futile approaches. In surveying the Day School scene, we cannot lump all day schools together, and assess in general terms their achievements. We must distinguish between uncommitted schools and Orthodox schools—and we even have to distinguish, among the latter, between those which see themselves specifically as Yeshivos and Beth Jacob schools, and those which prefer to be just Day Schools.

The differences between these groups may outwardly seem minute; but, in our quest to penetrate behind formulae and externals to the inner spirit of our educational institutions, we can discern the fine points in which these schools differ from one another—and the profound educational consequences that follow from them. What are the characteristics of *Yeshiva* education? Some years ago I tried to define them in *The Jewish Parent* (June, 1965) in this manner:

It is vital that we imbue our pupils with a feeling for the sanctity of Torah study and for our obligation never to stop studying; it is vital that . . . we stress the centrality of religious experience and practice for the Jew, and the demands they make on him; it is vital that we teach a pattern of life based wholeheartedly on the religious directives of the *Shulchan Aruch*, and show their applicability to modern life.

Our basic premises have ruled out a pallid pattern of education where every social and educational technique of the public schools is indiscriminately imitated; where the personal convictions and conduct of teachers is in conflict with their own teachings; where facile Hebrew self-expression is considered more important than the content of Torah study; where the Talmud becomes a plaything for coeducational classes; where there is a failure to prepare either the boys or the girls for the particular mission that the Torah assigns to them within a truly Jewish society; where not only coeducation but dancing, dating and all the other social morés of our time are the accepted rule.

These practices are naturally wrong because they are deviations from the way of the Torah. Moreover, even from a purely *practical* viewpoint, it is only those schools abiding by the true standards of Torah education which can *really* inspire our youngsters, make the experience of Sinai come alive again for them, and thus vouchsafe the future of our people. To these schools—and to these schools alone—can the eloquent words of Dr. Berkson, quoted above, truly be applied. YET A SURVEY of the American Jewish educational scene cannot really conclude on this note. We must

not give the impression, to ourselves or to others, that within *our* bailiwick everything is fine. Possession of the *correct* formula for Jewish education does not automatically assure its actual realization. The truth is that, while we may be clear about the ideal to be pursued, we are still far from having attained it—despite the successes we have had. I do not only think of all the children that we ought to have drawn into our institutions, and whom we have not reached. I do not only refer to all the day schools which, by guidance and perseverance, we could have turned into dynamic Yeshivos and Beth Jacob Schools, and which meanwhile proceed on their old uninspired and uninspiring course. I mean, above all, the shortcomings within our own schools which deserve constant scrutiny.

Do our teachers have the personal relationship with their pupils that is a necessary condition of successful guidance? Do we pay them in such a manner that they do not have to be overburdened by the search for side income and can concentrate on their task? Do we accord them the status and respect which they must have in the eyes of both parents and students?

Do our principals have the time and free hand to concentrate on teacher guidance, school supervision, and curriculum development? Do we provide differential curricula for the gifted, and for those slower learners who, under 'normal' circumstances, will emerge from their school career without any significant gain in evidence?

What do we do about the spirit of our institutions? Do we provide those all-important functions like *Minyan*, *Mishmar*, etc. which fix the character of a Yeshiva? Do we provide opportunities for the students, on Shabbos, Yom Tov and also at other times, to express themselves in appropriate Torah activities? Do our General Studies departments exist in splendid and competitive isolation, or are they taken under the wings of the Torah spirit which must be the central force in a Torah institution? Do we guide our students to spend their summers in pursuit rather than in contravention of the Torah principles which we preach through the school year?

Many more related questions could be posed, to highlight the many areas in which our institutions may be vulnerable. A good many of the weaknesses that it needs no study to reveal, are the result of the intolerable lack of money that afflicts our schools, or of the lack of time and peace of mind of our administrators, in consequence of the perennial financial crises. But there are also areas which depend exclusively upon our clear-sighted understanding of the real meaning of Torah education. We can deem ourselves fortunate indeed that we perceive this real meaning, instead of being misled by superficial substitute approaches; but this very knowledge imposes upon us a heavier responsibility to act upon it with forcefulness and dedication. □

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## A Letter to the Editor

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TO THE EDITOR: I have had the privilege of being a congregant of Rabbi Shelomoh Danziger. Thus I came to appreciate his learning, [and] cogent reasoning . . . Accordingly, I regret that he has not read my own words with the sensitivity or accuracy that I feel would do justice to them. However, nothing that I say here should obscure my appreciation for him, for his taking my words seriously and for 'defending' the tradition—even if, in this case, I think he has pegged me wrong. Moreover, I hope this exchange will start a process of dialogue and clarification which will strengthen Orthodox thinking.

MY COMMENTS on halachic process and halachic change are predicated on the same structure of *Torah She B'al Peh* that is described by Rabbi Danziger. Yet while attacking my views vigorously, he concedes, in essence, what I said. He speaks of *definition* and *application*, of the body of revealed Halocha. I quote him: "The crucial point is *definition* and *application*, not to be confused with subjective *interpretation*." But this is words: All definition and application is a form of interpretation. (What is the crucial element in a case? What is the foreground and what background? What is the salient feature found in both and what are the differences which count in deciding whether our new case is the same as the old). Rabbi Danziger completes his admission by conceding that since it is carried out by human minds "*subjectivity* may sometime enter the scene." Clearly Rabbi Danziger recognizes what I do: the operation of Halocha in history and in changing circumstances. But by rhetoric he refutes my views while in essence conceding them. Rabbi Danziger and I would probably differ on the extent of subjectivity (as do the writings of, for example, Reb Yisroel Salanter and the Chofetz Chaim) but as he concedes, this is the prerogative of the Gedolim as long as they "scrupulously avoid conscious distortion." This is all that I speak of when I say that halachic change can only take place as "the result of deliberate consideration of the Gedolim." Naturally this means that Gedolim will not distort or twist Halocha—that is why I insist that Gedolim alone can handle this matter.

If anything it is Rabbi Danziger who reduces the classic halachic tradition when he states that my definition of halachic change including "expansion, adaptation, changes in strategy, as well as re-evaluation of halachos" is not compatible with Orthodox theories. All these can be illustrated in actual halochos. I also think he obscures how much the decisions of *Chazal*

and *Rishonim* reflect the goals and value judgments which they saw in Torah. Thus 'expansion' is the entire record of *Torah She B'al Peh* (cf. the Rambam's *Hakdomoh* to *Seder Zeraim*. It is noteworthy that Rambam's *hakdomoh* uses the term *sevoroh* to describe the derivation of the expanded laws.) 'Adaptation' can be illustrated by such cases as *heter iska*, *mechiras chametz*, *prosboul*, *cherem d'Rabeinu Gershon*, the Geonic permission for the wife to force an immediate divorce (to prevent the multiplication of *mamzerim* if she is kept betwixt and between, say the *Rishonim*!)—all these keep Halocha properly functioning in changing economic or social circumstances; 'changes in strategy' can be seen in the expansion of the role of the *Bais Haknesses* and the 'active' form of prayer, particularly after the shattering tragedy of the destruction of the *Bais Hamikdosh* with its more sacramental tone; 're-evaluation of halochos' is exemplified in the Geonic ruling that heirs are obligated to pay parents' debts even from *metaltalin* (movable property) although the Talmud excuses them from such payments; the changing use of imprisonment if a debtor tries to evade payment, or the question of sending away a wife after ten years of barren marriage, or the Israeli Rabbinate's attempt to give the mother priority in custody of children in a divorce. (Needless to say, these examples are chosen at random. One could compile a list of all four categories of change as long as Rabbi Danziger's article.) And all this is not to mention the extraordinary range of interpretation of the meaning, purpose and function of halochos (*taamei hamitzvos*) which has marked our tradition. Clearly, all these halochos and understandings are *not* outside of the halachic process or the classic tradition.

IT IS APPARENTLY Rabbi Danziger's contention that Halocha cannot be involved in the areas of social and political reality as they unfold in history. Here he confuses the idea that *Torah She B'al Peh* is a late innovation of the *Perushim*—which he correctly rejects—with the idea that Halocha cannot deal with later historical phenomena—which is incorrect. In today's changed world, his view would leave Halocha totally out of the major areas of human work and relationships (except the private area). It would result in Halocha as an intellectual abstraction divorced from life. The historical experience areas he claims can be covered only by Hashkovo. Many areas are best left to Hashkovo (although our leadership has done precious little in this aspect). But his theory can lead to strange results. Thus he states the demand to apply the classical ha-

halachic process to “areas of qualitative modern experience and broader thought and value issues [war, poverty, civil rights, welfare capitalism and manufacture control]—I quote him—“can consistently be made only in line with non-Orthodox theories of substantive, post-Sinaitic halachic creation.” Well, everyone of these categories whose treatment Rabbi Danziger finds incompatible with Orthodox Halacha has been dealt with halachically in the tradition. In *Hilchos Melachim* (especially chapters 5-6), Rambam deals with halachic definitions of types of wars and the prescription of methods legitimate to each type of war. In *Hilchos Matnas Aneeyim* (especially chapters 7-10) he deals with poverty and society’s obligations toward the poor—including that classic of anti-poverty directives: the eight degrees of charity. As for ‘qualitative modern experiences,’ there are halachos that regulate the type of approaches and endearments one may use to one’s wife. And ‘manufacture control’ is exemplified in laws of *onaah* (legitimate profit margins) and the restrictions on building tanneries in a residential neighborhood. I could go on and on but the basic point is clear. The shifting social, economic and political framework of Jewish existence has brought with it, classically, halachic attempts to deal with the new conditions. The *Poskim* sought to realize the goals of the Torah and to this end the Halacha was properly, flexibly *extended* and *directed* to deal with reality. I am struck by the irony that some contemporary ‘Orthodox’ conceptions of Halacha have become so restrictive and over-static (as a defensive reaction to recent times attacks on Halacha) that they end up overlooking or obliterating the actual magnificent record of its history. But is it not a *reductio ad absurdum* if Hillel is made to look like Louis Finkelstein and the Rambam like Frankel and Weiss? I take my stand with the tradition in its richest and most effective way as a living force in actual history. Perhaps the best summary of my position would be: [Many Orthodox err in thinking that] “What actually is eternal, progressive development was [is] a static mechanism and the inner significance thereof as extra-mundane dream worlds.” These are the words of Samson Raphael Hirsch in *The Nineteen Letters* (p. 122). In Hirsch’s words, I seek to avoid being a member of the party “which bears it [Judaism] as a sacred relic, as a revered mummy, and fears to awaken its spirit” and of the party which is “filled with noble enthusiasm for the welfare of the Jews, but they look upon Judaism as a lifeless framework . . . they seek its spirit and find it not, and are in danger with all their efforts to help the Jew, of severing the last life-nerve of Judaism out of sheer ignorance” (*ibid.*, pp. 126-7). Hirsch states that “these two opposing elements are alike in the one great respect, that they are both in the wrong.”

RABBI DANZIGER’S treatment of my views on Revelation is, I believe, regrettably polemic. He imputes Biblical

Critical views to me by two crucial misreadings of my words out of context. He quotes me as saying: “There is *nothing* [Danziger’s italics] in Professor Petuchowski’s words that I felt could not be fully acceptable to Orthodoxy as it will look after going through the modern experience . . .” (Rabbi Danziger quotes this sentence three times to associate me with dangerous views.) In fact, I endorsed only *one specific aspect* of Prof. Petuchowski’s—his call that if men are willing to accept Halacha as the divine commandment, that we not judge their observance by quantitative criteria. To this I said:

“Here I would agree with Professor Petuchowski that, were Orthodoxy to stop measuring *Tzitzit both within as well as without its ranks, more people would be reconciled to the Tradition* [my italics]. There is nothing in Professor Petuchowski’s words [on quantitative criteria] that I felt could not be fully acceptable to Orthodoxy—as it will look after going through the modern experience, and possibly even now within many circles of Orthodoxy. It is a matter of degree at that point whether a person keeps part or all of the mitzvot.”

Even this agreement of mine does not represent surrender of any of the claims of any mitzvos but a recognition found in the tradition that, as moderns have particularly stressed, the best exhortation (and the way best calculated to raise observance) is example and personal contact rather than judgemental measurements or denunciation. Thus “after going through the modern experience,” we would instinctively *testify by doing all the mitzvos* rather than by criticizing those who don’t. Similarly, Rabbi Danziger implies that my words “as it [Orthodoxy] will look after going through the modern experience” mean—after we accept Bible criticism. But I *specifically defined* “going through the modern experience” *in my text* not as Bible Criticism, but “the renewal of the process of imbuing the contemporary experience with religious impact by applying religious values and practices to all areas of secular life.” And, this includes, I said, making it crystal clear that Orthodoxy’s “affirmations do not proceed from being in a cultural backwater or because Orthodoxy does not yet recognize the problems which have been raised.” (*Judaism*, vol. 15, No. 2, p. 138). I sincerely believe that Rabbi Danziger’s misreadings were unintentional but they vitiate much of his comments. Moreover, I believe he has a grave moral responsibility to make clear his error lest the doubts he has raised by these quotes linger.

LET ME STATE that my words on Revelation were deliberately general because I believe that we need much more scholarship if we are to speak in more than generalities. As I put it in an address at the Yeshiva University Rabbinic Alumni convention in Oct. 1965 (long before my interviews in *Commentator*) “Of course, if we are Orthodox Jews, we believe in *Torah Min Ha-*

*shamayim*. The real issue is, do we want to spell out what we mean by *Torah Min Hashamayim*? Are we willing to deal with the concrete problems posed by the fact that there may be a parallel in Babylonian literature to *Tanach*? But, I added, "instead of trying to deal with this honestly; instead of investing in our Yeshivot intellectually; instead of trying to invest in a Bible Department and in a student of the Bible who will be capable of carrying out a serious, concrete exposition of the problems and facing up to them, we continue to publish affirmations." I appreciate Rabbi Danziger's comment that the answer to the parallel is "because at the time of *Mattan Torah* G-d REVEALED to us how the temporal Semitic context was to be accepted, modified, rejected or bypassed." I too think this is a highly promising approach to the resolution. But to my knowledge a number of Roshei Yeshivos reject this. Indeed, it appears to me that Rav Aharon Kotler's talk to the yeshiva *mechanchim* on the *Avos*, by implication, seems to rule out his approach. (This is why I spoke as neutrally as possible in saying that Revelation "*may be*" [my italics] less external etc.) But does this mean that Rabbi Danziger is guilty of heresy?

I personally believe that we don't even have one serious full length study of what traditional thinkers thought *Torah Min Hashamayim* meant concretely throughout history. Nor do I know what modern scholarship will look like after religious scholars work through it. But we certainly need a lot of work in this area. "Who has not heard of the Code of Hammurabi" asks Rabbi Danziger and thereby implies that I must be driving at terrible heresies. If by 'heard' he means: takes it seriously into account, then the answer to Rabbi Danziger's question is: probably *not* most of the Gedolim of our time. Moreover, there are a host of other items needing scholarship, to wit; supposed contradictions in the text, city, place, names or dates which are allegedly inaccurate or anachronistic, the whole problem of the history and development of ideas, etc. There is no need to look for heresy to explain my call for such scholarship. Until we provide such scholarship, we shall be intellectually irrelevant in this area because people think that our affirmations stem from ignorance of the problems. Rabbi Danziger implies 'rashness' and use of non-Orthodox criteria in my call for non-apologetic studies. But at least one Rosh Yeshiva whom I deeply respect said in response to my interview that Orthodox students or scholars should never be exposed to Bible criticism lest they go astray. To this I replied "Nor need we block such scholarship from encountering the thesis of contemporary scholarship and evidence." This has nothing to do with rashness or *apikorsik* assumptions in Torah study for our scholars.

LET ME CONCLUDE by saying that Rabbi Danziger and I are operating from different visions of the current

situation. He feels that the assimilation of authentic Orthodoxy is the most present danger. I feel that for all such dangers, the fact is that Orthodoxy has made its stand. Its survival is now recognized as beyond question even by groups that hailed its 'demise' only decades ago. A new situation is emerging. The shattering events of our time and the recognition of the failures of modernism have opened up exciting opportunities for authentic Judaism—if we can be worthy of our opportunity. We have proven that we can stand fast and say no to the excessive claims of modernity. People are now willing to listen to us. The question now is: can we exercise leadership; can we enter into and sanctify every aspect of life; can we reconcile to the Tradition and save masses of Jews who face assimilation and extinction unless led back constructively? We must shift gears from defensive denial and self-justification to a search for a "rich and complex understanding of the classic halachic tradition," a searching self-criticism and new media of reaching out and restating our message. Our self-criticism should stem from the recognition that if we have been ineffective with others and with ourselves it was because of the shallowness of our understanding of the Torah. We are small and fallible and the Torah is great. To this end, too, I am searching for what I would call tentatively 'continuum concepts' or 'conveyor concepts.' These are concepts which are many-layered so that they reach out and speak even to someone on the margin who understands it at his level. Then as he deepens his study, he is led—as by a conveyor—through new layers of meaning into the heart of the tradition. In short, such concepts would be paths of *teshuva* in our time. One such term is the covenant idea—which is neither tenuous nor shadowy nor a way of sidestepping *Torah Min Hashamayim*, as Rabbi Danziger implied. It is precisely the affirmation of the Torah that the infinite G-d—who is ultimately beyond our comprehension, praise, or help—nevertheless in his infinite *chesed*, chooses to enter into covenantal relationship with us (Man) who by comparison to Him are puny, imperfect often wilful. It is this miraculous fact which underlies His giving *Torah Min Hashamayim*, His commanding us and His covenant in which He too is committed. (Conceivably, He might have created the world yet not cared for it or given Revelation to it. There might have been a *Torah Min Hashamayim* in which He commanded us without committing Himself.) Once he understands the Halocha as the terms of the covenant, the religious person's observance is deepened and related to G-d in all ways. At the same time, a marginal Jew may be caught by the awareness of covenant—even in a non-Orthodox manner. As he is drawn into it, he comes to see that at least some part of the Halocha is the expression of this covenant. (This is the stage that Petuchowski and many like him have reached.) As he deepens farther, he will come to realize that, if so, *any* Halocha may be

the expression of the covenant. (One or two Reform thinkers have already conceded this.) From there, the step to the heart of Torah is clear and close . . .

MY ANALYSIS of where we stand today leads me to look for a language and terminology that is *mekarev recho-kim* even as its depths and meaning would enrich those deepest in the tradition. Rabbi Danziger seems to insist on a language which would be *merachek even kerovim*. This is his privilege but I do not think that he can exclude not only those who disagree with his content but even those who would put things in their language rather than his.

I CAN NOT REPLY to Rabbi Danziger's views on separatism or his implied attitude toward other Jews. I could not do justice to my alternative in the space of a letter. He is entitled to his view which calls for the path of self-enclosure and erection of maximum fences. I believe it is no less authentic to go with the path of seeking maximum closeness and inclusiveness toward the rest of Israel. When G-d offered *Moshe Rabeinu* a way whereby the Torah would be preserved through Moshe while the rest of sinful Israel would be consigned to extinction, Moshe rejected this. He went so far as to say: blot me out from your book but save Israel. In effect, Rabbi Danziger is saying that the same offer is being made to us—but he believes we should accept it with relish. Indeed, he seeks to prevent any solution other than this.

Finally, Rabbi Danziger speaks of Orthodox Modernists. Here is where he really fails to read me. The modernist assumes that modern culture is normative and that Torah must be cut to its measure. I reject this and am a severe critic of modern culture (and of aspects of 'Modern Orthodoxy'—a term which I detest). I do not believe, however, that Eastern Europe had the full range of the tradition. And I do believe that there are aspects of our classic tradition which we have neglected, underutilized or even trampled, which certain valid insights of modern culture recall us to or even open up prospects of deepening. The current situation offers new media and opportunities for the flowering of Torah and an expansion of its influence unprecedented in history. It is not a question of dilution or selling out but of enriching our understanding of the tradition and recovering its full range. And, as I said in the Symposium on Religious Unity: we must go through the modern experience. This means, I said:

I am not speaking of *Kulot*, or of dismantling the law. Still less am I calling for uncritical acceptance of the categories of modern thought. If anything there is a need for more *mitzvot*. There is a need for the renewal of the process of imbuing the contemporary experience with religious import by applying religious values and practices to all areas of secular life. But this can only be done when Ortho-

doxy works through, in depth, the modern experience so that it speaks to this generation and in it. There is not a single affirmation or mitzva that it must *a priori* surrender. [This is contra Mordecai Kaplan who claims that the modern temper and naturalistic categories rule out a Personal G-d or *ata bechartanu* etc.] If men remain open and ready to hear, the voice of G-d may speak from anywhere. But it must be crystal clear that such affirmations do not proceed from being in a cultural backwater or because Orthodoxy does not yet recognize the problems which have been raised. (*Judaism*, op. cit., p. 138)

I believe that the influence of Torah and the Yeshiva world (and their religious effectiveness) will be multiplied a hundred-fold when we master our fears and face up to the problems and challenges we are encountering—and it should be done in a spirit of humility and *Ahavas Yisroel*. Nor are the sources for this approach to be found in "Karl Barth and Paul Tillich or Martin Buber." If I may say so, I have read very little of Karl Barth and Paul Tillich and only a moderate amount of Buber. The major influences on my thought in addition to the classic sources of Tanach, Talmud and Halacha were Reb Yisroel Salanter (and some of his 3rd-generation disciples): Rav Kuk and *yibadel lichayim*, Rav J. B. Soloveichick. (Needless to say, none of these men is to be held responsible for my interpretations or errors—if such they are). Here Rabbi Danziger's appeal to labels is misplaced and hardly compatible with his expressed agreement that "ideas should be judged on their merits rather than by their labels." I think the key is a willingness *lekabayl es ha-emes mi-mi she-amro*. We should seek not to proscribe or to semantically refute but to try to make ourselves worthy of being the *merkavah* for the *Ribbono Shel Olam* in our time.

DR. IRVING GREENBERG

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## Author's Reply

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RABBI DANZIGER REPLIES: Dr. Greenberg has referred to my relationship with him. Let me, therefore, similarly express at this point my appreciation of his *middos tovos* and his humility, which mark all his personal dealings. I also appreciate his wide reading and his sincerity in promoting a program of renewal for Judaism, a program which he considers beneficial. An extended exchange such as ours almost inexorably engenders overtones of sharpness regarding, not only the divergent views, but also the persons representing these views. Let me hasten to reassure Dr. Greenberg, as I have already done verbally, that I understand the inevitability of such overtones in his letter. I hope that



he too will understand my present remarks the same way. For, indeed, we do not want men of Dr. Greenberg's stature to become alienated from the mainstream of Orthodox tradition. *We want him with us, not against us.*

Yet, *many* of us are alarmed by his radical proposals, which, if unchecked, would incline toward non-Orthodox concepts and practices. Despite his humility *bein adam lachavero* and his acknowledgement of the role of our Gedolim, he has on *many* occasions and in *many* places assumed the role of making radical pronouncements on *fundamental* matters of *emunah* and practice. Therefore, my article was, let it be remembered, not an offensive attack, but rather a *defensive response* to *his* initiative, to *his* pronouncements.

WITH REGARD to Dr. Greenberg's letter, I regret to say that it changes very little. The clarification of issues must be based upon precision of language and logical argument; it will not result from homiletic or rhetorical approaches.

For example, the crux of the issue between us concerning the nature of *Torah She B'al Peh* and its application in successive generations is contained in my sentence, which Dr. Greenberg quotes: "The crucial point is conscientious *definition and application*, not to be confused with subjective interpretation." (In quoting me, Dr. Greenberg omitted the word "conscientious.") Dr. Greenberg says: "But this is words. All definition and application is a form of interpretation." Obviously, then, Dr. Greenberg refuses to see the difference, which is really fundamental.

Webster's Third New International Dictionary defines INTERPRET as:

1. To explain or tell the meaning of.
2. To understand and appreciate in the light of individual belief, judgment, interest, or circumstance.

There is a great difference between these two definitions. To give an example from American Constitutional Law, the first definition is that of strict construction. The strict constructionist wants only "to explain or tell the meaning of" the Constitution according to the objective definition of its legal categories. The loose constructionist, on the other hand, wants to understand the Constitution *in the light of the best interest of the nation in its changed circumstances*. The legal text of the Constitution becomes almost a *pretext* for new legislation.

The more candid of our experts admit that the law is not interpreted in sense 1 of Webster's International Dictionary, but rather in sense 2, in the light of the interest and circumstance of the nation. They see nothing wrong in this, because constitutional law is not sacred; it is merely a useful instrument in the service of society.

In the words of one writer, the Constitution "is of secondary importance; it is the instrument employed in the process. As a result, the Supreme Court assumes a legislative function." Or as another has written, "The life of the law . . . is not logic, but experience. Constitutional law is not a matter for categories." This is in contrast to those who view the Constitution as "received law . . . fundamental, absolute, and immutable."

But *G-d's revealed Written-Oral Torah* in all its halachic detail is obviously a different matter entirely. It must be defined and applied *objectively* and strictly, according to the *rigorous logic of legal categories*, for it is the *received law* of G-d—sacred, fundamental, absolute and immutable. There is no room here for loose, bold, subjective interpretation in the light of best interests and circumstances. This must be consciously and conscientiously and rigorously avoided. Only when there enters into the decisions some element of *unconscious* subjectivity on the part of the human Torah authorities, *despite their most conscientious efforts to avoid such subjectivity*, only then does the Torah tolerate such human *imperfection*.

In equating the concepts 'definition' and 'interpretation,' Dr. Greenberg opens the door to the *deliberate* injection of human elements and, in effect, permits legislation by interpretation—something completely contrary to Torah. (Naturally, the foregoing does not apply to the rabbinical *gezeros* and *takanos* which the Torah authorized. In *certain areas* and *according to certain rules* those who are invested with the required authority can decree *gezeros* and *takanos* in accordance with the circumstances of successive generations. These devices are limited by the Torah in scope to only certain areas. They are also limited to certain rules of application. In all the foregoing discussion, the insistence on the objective definition and application of legal categories refers, not to the issuance of *gezeros* and *takanos*, but to the definition and application of the main corpus of the revealed Halocha—the revealed law.)

Of course, to an *apikoros* like Isaac Hirsch Weiss: "Tradition [i.e., Halachah—s.d.] is . . . the history of interpretation of the Scriptures, which [interpretation] was constantly liable to variation, not on grounds of philology, but through the subjective notions of successive generations regarding religion and the method and scope of its application" (*Studies in Judaism* by Solomon Schechter, First Series, p. 183). Weiss *could* accept loose subjective interpretation, because he denied Sinaitic revelation of the legal categories of the received Halocha in the first place. To quote Schechter again: "Weiss does not consider even the Halachah as having come down from heaven, ready-made, and definitely fixed for all time" (*ibid.*) This is what I meant when I wrote that Dr. Greenberg's demand for "a thorough re-examination of the *Shulchan Oruch*" and "expansion, adaptation, changes in strategy, as well as re-evaluation of halachos" can be urged only on the premise of a

non-Orthodox conception of *Torah She B'al Peh* (Frankel, Weiss and Schechter), a premise which ignores the need for strict interpretation, for objective definition and application of the received legal categories.

But Dr. Greenberg chooses to ignore all this. Instead he stresses "how much the decisions of *Chazal* and *Rishonim* reflect the goals and value judgments which they saw in Torah." He notes that "Rambam's *hakdama* uses the term *sevoroh* to describe the derivation of the expanded laws," and he cites this as support of flexible 'expansion' of halocha. But the Rambam is very clear about the kind of *sevoroh* he means. To quote: "You will find in the whole of Talmud that they investigate the sense of the *sevoroh* which is the cause of the *machalokes*, and they say: *bemai kamiflege* (what is the legal logic behind the disagreement) or *mai taama deRabbi Piloni* (what is the legal reasoning of Rabbi So-and-So) . . ." Every student of the Talmud knows from innumerable examples what is meant by this. It is the *sevoroh* of strict, objective definition of the halachic category according to the rigorously legal logic found throughout the Talmud, the *Rishonim*, or the precise definitions of Reb Chaim Brisker. Larger goals and value judgments do not enter the process of rigorous analysis of legal categories. Neither do *Taamei Hamitzvos*; even though they certainly are not outside the classic tradition, they too are not relevant to the halachic process of legal definition and application. Goals and values emerge automatically from the halochos themselves after the rigorously objective process has been completed. In any case, the halachic opinion stands or falls on the basis of that objective process of legal analysis.

Now Dr. Greenberg is certainly not advocating this as 'expansion' of Halocha. Why would he advocate with such fanfare what has always been done and is still being done? The seriousness of the issue requires that we at least be *candid*.

TO ILLUSTRATE 'adaptation' Dr. Greenberg cites the well-known examples: "*heter iska*, *mechiras chametz*, *prosboul*, *cherem d'Rabeinu Gershom*, the Geonic permission for the wife to force an immediate divorce (to prevent the multiplication of *mamzerim* if the wife is kept betwixt and between)"—an incongruous combination of irrelevancies!

*Heter iska* and *mechiras chametz* are merely applications of advantageous aspects of the objective legal categories. Only the uninitiated non-Talmudists consider these to be subjective, loose 'adaptations.'

*Prosboul* and *cherem d'Rabeinu Gershom* are rabbinical *takanos*. No one opposes the right of the proper authorities to issue *gezeros* and *takanos* within their limited scope and according to their rules of application, as we have explained from the outset. But adaptation of the received *Halocha* by subjective, loose interpretation in areas of Halocha where *gezeros* and *takanos*

cannot be issued is non-Orthodox, as we have already explained at length.

The power to force a man to give a *get* for reasons considered adequate by *Beis Din* was always, according to the objective Halocha, a prerogative of *Beis Din*.

The remaining examples cited by Dr. Greenberg are *takanos deRabbanan*, and therefore irrelevant, as already explained. One could indeed compile a long list of such irrelevancies.

WHAT ABOUT the application of Halocha to major contemporary issues? *Hilchos Melochim* (chapters 5-6) does indeed deal with halachic definitions of types of wars and the methods legitimate to each type. *Hilchos Matonos Aniyim* does indeed deal with obligations toward the poor. Does Dr. Greenberg really believe that I am unaware of the fact that we have halochos dealing with war, obligations toward the poor and legitimate profits (*onaah*)? What I wrote was: "The legalistic application of the revealed Halochos to the specific cases of successive generations is in the main a judicial, not a legislative, function [i.e., objective definition and application of the received legal categories, not loose interpretation of "expansion, adaptation, changes in strategy, as well as re-evaluation of halochos" in order to legislate what does not follow from the objective definition and application of the received halachic categories—s.d.]. . . . Dr. Greenberg's demand to apply the classical process to . . . broader thought and value issues [war, poverty, civil rights, welfare capitalism and manufacture control] . . . can consistently be made only in line with the non-Orthodox theories of substantive, post-Sinaitic halachic creation." Why? Because the classical process of objective definition and application of the received halachic categories of *Hilchos Melochim* will not yield even one *halocha* concerning Vietnam. We will find halachic guidance on the topic of *our obligations* to the country in which we live; when we are called upon to further its safety and well-being. But, as for the war itself, Halocha is silent, as it deals exclusively with wars waged by Yisroel (upon authorization by the Sanhedrin of seventy-one). Only loose, legislative, subjective interpretation can create from this legal category any *halochos* concerning Vietnam. This is non-Orthodox, substantive, post-Sinaitic creation of new halachic categories. Of course, we may be guided in Vietnam by the spirit of *Hilchos Melochim*. But this is Hashkofa not Halocha. The same is true of civil rights, welfare capitalism, etc. It is not the Rambam who looks "like Frankel and Weiss," it is Dr. Greenberg!

In all the foregoing, we have not even touched on the fact that the received Halocha, as laid down in the Talmud, is vested with a fixed canonical authority, (and to a somewhat lesser degree in the *Shulchan Aruch*) which rules out "re-evaluation of halochos" even through objective legalistic interpretation. Objec-

tive interpretation, since the conclusion of the Talmud, must be limited to the *application*, not the re-evaluation, of the received canonical Halochos. Only in non-canonical areas can there be re-evaluation of earlier decisions—and, of course, even then only through objective legal methods.

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IS THIS CONCEPTION of Halocha what Rabbi S. R. Hirsch criticized as a static, mechanical approach? The quotation from Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch's *Nineteen Letters* has obviously been completely misunderstood by Dr. Greenberg, or else wrested out of context. Rabbi Hirsch complains that "a form of learning came into existence" [i.e., Kabola] which should have been understood in terms of "eternal progressive development." Instead it was construed as "a static mechanism and the inner significance thereof as extramundane dream worlds." Rabbi Hirsch was not complaining, as Dr. Greenberg does, about the lack of progressive development in *Halocha*. In all the vast writings of Hirsch—the great reviver of Judaism's spirit in relation to modern, cultured man—there is not a word to suggest the need to develop Halocha in conformity with modern notions. His complaint was only that the same received halocha of old was practiced by the Torah-True as a "mechanical habit, devoid of spirit," and borne by them "as a sacred relic, as a revered mummy, and [with] fear to awaken its spirit." Of the leaders of Reform, who *did* demand halachic change, Hirsch writes that they "are partly filled with noble enthusiasm for the welfare of the Jews, but they look upon Judaism as a lifeless framework [of Halocha] . . . and are in danger, with all their efforts to help the Jew, of severing the last life-nerve of Judaism out of sheer ignorance." Dr. Greenberg says he seeks to avoid being a member of this party. Yet reluctantly I must say that Hirsch's description actually fits Dr. Greenberg. He *is* filled with noble enthusiasm, but he *is* endangering Orthodox Judaism. His approach to Halocha, in effect, subverts it from within. I am forced to agree with the Israeli periodical *Shearim* (26 Av 5726), which reported Dr. Greenberg's pronouncements in Israel under the caption: REFORM IN ORTHODOX GARB.

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REGARDING THE NATURE of Revelation, I am more than pleased to accept Dr. Greenberg's statement that any imputation of Bible Critical views to him represents a misinterpretation of his words. As a matter of fact, I made it clear in my article that "we must, of course, accept the author's clarification [i.e., Dr. Greenberg's disclaimer of Critical views] in good faith." In response to his demand that I dispel any lingering doubts about his views, I hereby reiterate gladly what I wrote in my article, that I accept his statement that the inference of Critical views represents a wrong interpretation of his words. However, I must also reiterate the statement

of my article that "Dr. Greenberg must accept responsibility for having used language with misleading connotations."

How is one to know that the words "There is nothing in Professor Petuchowski's words that I felt could not be fully acceptable to Orthodoxy—as it will look after going through the modern experience" refer only to the one specific paragraph of Petuchowski's that we not judge observance by quantitative criteria ("measuring Tzitzit")? And how is one to understand the very next passage which concludes: "I fear, however, that this agreement is a rather misleading one, because when we get down to the hard question of specifics—what we mean by Covenant, what we mean by G-d and so on—there is where the sticky points will stick"? Does this not conote that the agreement with Petuchowski was related, not only to quantitative criteria of *observance*, but also to fundamentals of *emunah*? Was there not a striking parallel between Dr. Greenberg's use of the expression that Divine Revelation may be "less external or *mechanical* (italics mine) than many Jews now think" and Petuchowski's disdain for "the *mechanical* (italics mine) view of Revelation"? Again I publicly and joyfully accept Dr. Greenberg's clarification; but *his* is the responsibility for the misleading connotation.

In fact, in reacting to Dr. Greenberg's utterances, even where we agree with them as he later clarified them, we cannot be guided by what he *meant*, but only by what he *wrote*. Even though *he* did not mean what the words conveyed, too many others unfortunately understood them that way, seeing in them assent to views totally opposed to Torah. For that reason we must point out the unacceptability of such views, even while gladly noting that Dr. Greenberg himself does not share them.

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DR. GREENBERG WOULD have us establish Bible departments in our yeshivos in which the *apikorsus* of Bible Criticism would be encountered by our *talmidim*. He wants us to deal with the challenge of Bible Criticism. Refuting the *apikorsim* and exposing their fallacies is indeed part of our tradition. Dr. Greenberg has himself read several of my own monographs containing refutations of Bible Critical arguments in connection with a number of Scriptural passages involving some of the items he has enumerated. Hence he knows that I accept *in principle* that Bible Criticism should be refuted by Orthodox scholars. The anti-Critical work of Gedolim like R. David Hoffmann, R. Isaac Halevi and R. Chaim Heller—*zichronam liverocha*—was appreciated by all our Gedolim as *melech Hashem*. But I remind Dr. Greenberg that refutation of *apikorsim* has traditionally been the work of *individual* scholars, whose works are available to all—Orthodox or non-Orthodox—who have a special interest in the matter. However, to subject our *talmidei hayeshivos* as a matter of routine to the systematic poison of Bible Criticism, or any other

*apikorsus*, is strategically unsound and dangerous.

In other words, those who have been exposed to poison need to be provided with the antidote. It would be folly, however, to systematically feed poison to the majority of our healthy *talmidim*. Some might even die before the antidote did its work. Others might never be restored to full health. Moreover, as I once heard Prof. Elizur of the Hebrew University comment. "If we would take the time to refute *all* the Critical nonsense that is printed almost daily by so-called scholars, we would have time for nothing else." As Rav Breuer once characterized the attitude of the Hirschian school: "G-d's Torah is not on trial."

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DO I WANT to exclude "those who would put things in their language" rather than mine?—certainly not. But "their language" ("conveyor concepts") must not imply a diminution of Torah. To communicate implied falsifications of Torah to the *rechokim*, those far from us, is worse than no communication. Dr. Greenberg was asked about "the essential element in Jewish theology," and he answered: "The covenant idea." Naturally, the Divine Covenant in the context of *Torah Min Hashomayim* is "neither tenuous nor shadowy." But covenant without *Torah Min Hashomayim* is indeed tenuous and shadowy. Nor for one moment did I assume that Dr. Greenberg personally was using the 'covenant idea' to sidestep *Torah Min Hashomayim*. But he *did* use it to sidestep the implication of *Torah Min Hashomayim* to the *rechokim*. He himself conceded this. This, in my view, is unacceptable communication, because the Torah message is diminished by implication. Be it remembered, moreover, that his answer was addressed, not to COMMENTARY, but to COMMENTATOR, the newspaper of Yeshiva College, read by young talmudic students whose religious concepts are still being modified as they grow into mature Jews. "Conveyor ideas" is a two-way system. They also convey implications to the *kerovim* (those close to us). Dr. Greenberg does not subscribe to the implied dilutions. But he knows that these dilutions *are* being bandied about in many circles today (witness COMMENTARY's recent symposium on Jewish Belief). His "conveyor ideas" have the effect of granting legitimacy to these dilutions.

THE SEPARATISM I ADVOCATED was not one of "erection of maximum fences," as Dr. Greenberg charges. I called it "non-integrated adaptation," and presented it as a carefully considered alternative to maximum isolation. In view of the rampant assimilation of our day, it deserves more serious treatment than Dr. Greenberg's derisive—and incorrect—analogy from Moshe Rabeinu. The separation I invoked was *not against my fellow-Jews*, but against contemporary society at large, because of its assimilatory dangers. This is clear from the context of my remarks. We must, of course, draw close

our fellow-Jews by exemplary Torah living—*bein adam la-Makom* and *bein adam la-chavero*—by friendship, and by exposition of undiluted Torah views. The Greenbergs do not have a monopoly either on 'humility' or on *Ahavas Yisroel*. In my view, however certain stipulations must be met in our endeavors to be *mekarev rechokim*. The effort must be made from a stance which does not imply any diminution of the *kovod* of Hashem's Torah as the only absolute truth and the noblest program for human living. This rules out any dialogue out of mutual respect for each other's religious views. Also the character of the *kehilla* must be Orthodox, and its *leadership, but not membership*, must be limited to the Orthodox. Moreover, we can draw close only to the misguided laymen, not to the leaders who are the very propagators of anti-Torah doctrines.

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DR. GREENBERG counts R. Yisroel Salanter and Rav Kook among his major influences. They never spoke of halachic liberalization in their efforts to be *mekarev rechokim*. R. Yisroel was opposed to the *Orthodox (yereim)* seminaries of Germany because, in his view, they produced rabbis who tended "to be lenient in the views of the *Achronim*." He opposed the formation of a rabbinical seminary in Vilna because he did not believe that a modernized curriculum could possibly produce "great Talmudists, men of piety, and solid faith." (For both citations see *Tenuas Hammusar*, Vol. 1, pp. 164, 167). Rav Kook's responsa were not different in kind or degree from those of other *Poskim*. His attitude toward the American Conservative movement was adamant. Rav Kook's son, the present Rosh Yeshiva of *Merkaz Harav*, recently caused an uproar because of his 'extreme' position in opposing the lecturing of Cecil Roth in the Bar Ilan University because the latter included Bible Critical views in his books. This was not a departure from his great father's kind of *Ahavas Yisroel*.

As for the influence of Rav J. B. Soloveichick, it is a curious fact that his truly devoted *talmidim*, those who strain their minds to grasp the rigorous definitions of objective halachic categories that are the glory of Brisk, are the ones in Yeshiva University who most vigorously oppose Dr. Greenberg's program.

IN CONCLUSION, I ENVY Dr. Greenberg his exalted goal of becoming worthy "of being the *merkova* for the *Ribbono Shel Olom* in our time." I know that I too should aspire to become like Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov, who did indeed reach this exalted *madreiga*. Realistically, however, I will have to content myself with the more humble aspiration of being one of His lesser servants. Dr. Greenberg's *merkova* attitude goes far to explain his 'broad shoulders' in espousing revolutionary changes in Orthodox Judaism. □

*The Jewish Observer / December, 1966*

# Goloh or Geuloh?

## Reflections on Chanukah by Moshe Sherer

IN THE HAFTORAH of Shabbos Chanukah, the *Navi* Zecharia describes his vision: . . . והנה מגורת זהב כלה—וגלה על ראשה—*And behold there was a golden Menorah (candelabra) with a GULOH (a bowl) on its top.* Our Sages declare in the Midrash that this Menorah is symbolic of *Klal Yisroel*, and then, in a beautiful word-play, point out that the word *Guloh* (גולה), the golden bowl topping the Menorah, implies *Goloh* (גולה)—dispersion, and *Geuloh* (גאולה)—redemption.

The Menorah symbol bears within it these two paradoxical aspects: how one interprets this symbol in his approach to life determines whether he takes the road to *Goloh*, to disaster, or to *Geuloh*, to victory and eternity. The events of Chanukah help us better understand how this one symbol can branch off into two such diverse ends.

- The Jewish camp in the days of Antiochus was split. The Hellenists (*Misyavnim*) stressed the outer forms of Judaism, the ceremonial. All they saw in the Menorah was the *זהב טהור*, the pure glittering gold which pleased their aesthetic sense. The Chashmonaim, on the other hand, looked deeper and saw the *שמן טהור*, the pure oil, the inner warmth emanating from a light kindled in holiness. A concern with the externals of religion leads ultimately to *Goloh*, to a loss of Jewish cohesiveness. The road to *Geuloh* demands penetration to the substance, commitment to the core—to content.

- The miracle of the one day supply of oil that burned for eight days is central in the Chanukah theme. Many commentators have given differing explanations as to why Chanukah celebrates an *eight-day* miracle, which the *Bais Yosef* points out was actually only a *seven-day* miracle, since there was sufficient oil to burn the first day. One sage wisely observed that the miracle of the first day was manifest in the courage of the Chashmonaim to initiate the lighting of the Menorah, when logic dictated that their effort to maintain the *Ner Tomid* would quickly be dissipated. To achieve *Geuloh* one must have the capacity to reach out for the unattainable. Were the Jew to have been deterred by his inadequacies and inhibited by his limitations, he would long ago have been swallowed up by the *Goloh*.

- The events of Chanukah yield another significant insight. The Greeks contaminated the oils in the *Bais Hamikdosh*. The question arises: If the Greeks aimed to black out the Menorah forever, would it not have

better suited their purpose to *completely* destroy the oils instead of only defiling them?

However, their method exposes their sinister intentions. The Greeks reasoned: Let the Menorah lights burn brightly—but let the flames arise from contaminated oils; let them shed a false light. The Greeks understood that their devilish design to subvert Torah would be better achieved if they could cause the Jewish people to illuminate the world with impure oils. The purity of Judaism, is the determinant of *Goloh* or *Geuloh*.

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IN RECENT YEARS, Madison Avenue has developed a booming Chanukah industry in an effort to exploit the Menorah, as they did, *l'havdil* with the Xmas tree. During this season, newspaper advertisements offer varieties of Chanukah Menorahs (all styles and shapes—musical Menorahs that play *Hava Nagila*), Chanukah greetings cards, Chanukah candies, Chanukah wrapping paper. With all this hoopla, the meaning of Chanukah has had little impact on the uneducated Jew. Contrast this with the experience of our grandparents: many of them lit their *naïros* in crude utensils, but the light they kindled penetrated every nook of their homes.

Like the Hellenists, our generation has enthroned the externals of the Menorah, and extended this philosophy into all aspects of their Jewish living. We have taken a leaf from the famed super-salesman Elmer Wheeler, who instructed restaurateurs: "*Don't sell the steak, sell the sizzle!*" By selling the 'sizzle' of Mitzvoths, instead of the life-giving substance of Yiddishkeit, the spiritual hucksters have projected our generation on the *Goloh* road instead of the road to *Geuloh*.

Furthermore, our generation has lost its belief in miracles, and has placed its faith in studies, surveys and resolutions. They have exchanged the spiritual daring of our fathers for a cold, pragmatic approach to Judaism. Proper goals for genuine Judaism are often diluted because they do not seem practical. The lesson of the one-day supply of oil of the Chashmonaim era seems to have passed by our generation, as we plod along with our chilling 'realism.'

What is most remarkable in this analogy is that the strategy of the modern-day Hellenist forces is strikingly similar to the tactics of the Greeks of old. Only the scenery has changed. There are very many movements in Jewry that have kindled lights which they hold

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*"In the United States, Jewish life can best be characterized as glittering and dazzling on the outside, but eroded and cold on the inside. Here too, the modern-day Hellenists are building a Judaism based on slogans instead of sincerity, on theatrics instead of theology."*

*"In contrast to all other Yomim Tovim where there is a specific mitzvoh of simchah, a command to rejoice — we find no such mitzvoh regarding Chanukah. Why? Should not the victories and miracles of Chanukah also be marked with the same degree of joy as all other holidays?"*

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proudly aloft, but the flame in their Menorah comes from the defiled oil which they themselves have contaminated by trampling on basic Jewish concepts. All of these Menorahs that have been lit by the forces that work from within to overthrow Torah authority and classical Judaism, have contributed to the chaos and confusion which characterize Jewish life today.

In Israel, for example, a Jewish flame has been lit which casts its light into every corner of the globe. Indeed the Menorah has become the official national symbol of the State of Israel. As each year goes by, it becomes increasingly obvious that the light that goes forth from Zion is hardly *distinctively Jewish*. Indeed it is difficult to distinguish it from all the other national lights that emanate from the nations of the world. Is building a Jewish State without the Jewish soul a step towards *Geulah*, or is it creating yet another spiritual *Golah*?

In the United States, Jewish life can best be characterized as glittering and dazzling on the outside, but eroded and cold on the inside. Here too, the modern-day Hellenists are building a Judaism based on slogans instead of sincerity, on theatrics instead of theology. The '57-varieties' of Judaism competing for the attention of the American Jew, are making a pretense of saving our youth with clichés and ceremonials. Today they are the sad witnesses of the appalling results of this policy of serving our youth adulterated spiritual lollipops, instead of inspiring them with the broad majestic sweep of our Torah.

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**I**N CONTRAST to all other *Yomim Tovim* where there is a specific *mitzvoh* of *simchah*, a command to rejoice—we find no such *mitzvoh* regarding Chanukah. Why? Should not the victories and miracles of Chanukah also be marked with the same degree of joy as all other holidays?

A great rabbi once gave this explanation: The battle of Chanukah, although blessed with temporary victory in the days of the Chashmonaim, *never really ended*—

it continues to this very day. It was essentially a struggle against the forces that had set as their goal להשכיחם להשכיחם תורתך ולהעבירם מחוקי רצינות—to make the Torah a museum-piece and to assimilate the Jewish masses by subterfuge and internal subversion. This battle to confuse and betray true Judaism still rages in our times, and while engulfed in the smoke of battle, one does not pause to rejoice. In such a continuing crisis, one must concentrate with greater vigor towards the *Geulah* goal: total Torah commitment must replace tokenism; complete consecration must replace crippling compromise. □

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# Gleanings From Israel's Press

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## Israel's Religious Population

HOW MANY observant Jews are there in Israel? A sociological study by the Israel Institute of Applied Social Research estimates that 30 per cent of Israel's population "can reasonably be called religious" and that an additional 46% "observe tradition to some extent." The Israel Central Bureau of Statistics reports that 89.2 per cent of the Jewish population regularly listens to the radio but that 29% of the regular listeners do not use the radio on Shabbos (when *Kol Yisroel*, the Government-owned network, schedules its best programs). . . . A Jewish Agency information officer places the "Orthodox religious" population at 33%, and divides the remaining two-thirds into two groups: those who partly observe religious laws and customs (45%) and those who are completely unobservant (20%). . . . One-third of Israel's Jewish population of about two million amounts to over 650,000 persons, which means that Israel today has one of the largest and most concentrated Orthodox communities in the world. . . . The quality of religious life has improved markedly in recent years as a massive revival of Torah learning has been sweeping the Holy Land. Chinuch Atzmai schools, mesivtos, and yeshivos are unable to accommodate the demand for religious education by an increasing number of Israelis.

## Lost Children

OF THE HUNDREDS of thousands of Sefardi families who came to Israel shortly after 1948, most of them were religious. A government poll of the immigrants revealed that 70% wanted religious education for their children. But aliyah officials told the parents that religion was a thing of the past, part of the old country's primitive ways which were to be forgotten in the new homeland. Thousands of children were separated from their parents and placed in left-wing kibbutzim and non-religious schools and homes.

Today, fifteen years later, there has come to public attention a new tale of not just de-Judaizing, but alleged kidnapping by Youth Aliyah officials. Approximately 250 Yemenite immigrant

children disappeared from their parents' homes in the immigrant camps in the early 1950s. The parents were told that their children had become ill and had been taken to hospitals and children's homes. The parents, bewildered in the displaced world of the new immigrant, accepted these statements at face value.

When after a long period of time the children were not returned to their homes, the parents were told by Youth Aliyah workers that the youngsters had died of their illnesses. Even then the matter seemed strange to the parents since officials would not supply them with any information on the children, such as the names of the hospitals in which they had been treated or the place of burial. Not suspecting any foul play, however, the parents accepted the bad news and mourned their children's deaths.

Today the parents of these children are convinced that they are not dead but very much alive. They have discovered that no death certificates for any of the children are on file with the government; moreover, records indicate that every one of the children received a draft notice on his eighteenth birthday.

The parents, who have requested a full-scale investigation to determine what happened to their children, suspect that they were placed in the homes of non-religious couples.

## Rabbi Accused

RABBI AMRAM BLAU (no relation to the Neturei Karta leader), the Religious Affairs Ministry official who is in charge of the maintenance of Mount Zion, has been indicted for allegedly causing the accidental death of David Palumbo, a sculptor. The indictment came three months after the accident, which occurred last August.

Palumbo was killed when his motor scooter hit a chain strung across the road leading to Mount Zion to eliminate traffic on Shabbos. Following his death, the League Against Religious Coercion organized groups to seek out roadblocks and have them removed so that vehicular travel could proceed undisturbed on Shabbos and Yom Tov.

Rabbi Blau was arrested although a police investigation revealed that Palumbo, who lived and worked in his studio

up the road, knew about the chain, and had a key to the chain's lock. Police found a letter in which Palumbo stated that he himself had requested that the chain be affixed so that his work in his studio would not be disturbed by noise of traffic from the road.

The League has proposed that, "An investigation commission should be authorized to inspect the content of sermons heard in synagogue on Shabbos and holidays, and also the critical articles published in the religious press, in order to determine to what extent the terrorist acts stem directly or indirectly from the constant incitement against secularist 'sinners' and against the laws of the state which is heard day and night from the self-styled leaders of the religious community."

## Schools or Clubs?

IN KIRYAT GAT recently, a boy was scheduled to celebrate his Bar Mitzvah in a local synagogue. When the congregation's Rabbi Dermer discovered that the boy's entire family had arrived on Shabbos in automobiles, he refused to allow the boy to be called to the Torah.

The Israeli press condemned Rabbi Dermer for denying the boy the right to observe the mitzvah of blessing the Torah. One newspaper called the rabbi's action "stupid and offensive, wicked and stubborn." It proceeded to call the rabbi a "dim-witted . . . publicity bound."

A Knesset member recently declared that the opening of new synagogues was responsible for Israel's juvenile delinquency problem, since the funds thus expended could be used to open youth clubs instead.

## New Schools

AMERICAN *Peylim*, the organization of yeshiva student volunteers, has scored two major successes in its work within the Oriental Jewish community; the first in Rosh Ha'ayin, a town located east of Petach Tikva and populated almost exclusively by 16,000 religious Yemenite immigrants. Thousands of children are enrolled in the town's religious schools, but until last year there was no secondary school. When the Histadrut established a secular vocational high school, the

town's citizens appealed for help. *Peylim* opened Rosh Ha'Ayin's first mesivta, which fulfilled a wish of R. Abron Kotler who had a special interest in the town and urged the establishment of a mesivta

so that graduates of the religious schools could continue their Torah education. The other *Peylim* success was in Kfar Chassidim, where a seminary for girls was so outstanding in its first year that hundreds of parents of prospective students waited on long lines during the registration period this year.

the religious political parties are prohibited from supporting the proposed amendments to the Anatomy and Pathology Law, which clearly violate Halcho and human rights.

It is believed that the meeting was sought by the doctors because of fear that increased public indignation might force revision of the law.

At the meeting the doctors were asked by the rabbis whom Rabbi Nissim had invited to participate, if the Medical Association had ever censured any physician who had violated the present law, had broken promises not to perform a post-mortem operation, or who had removed organs from bodies and not returned them for burial. The doctors could recall no case of censure.

Following the meeting, the Association issued a statement hailing the friendly spirit which allegedly prevailed among the rabbis and doctors. Actually, the confrontation took place in an atmosphere of tense hostility.

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### Doctors Meet Rabbis

THE AUTOPSY CRISIS continues despite efforts on the part of the Israel Medical Association to give the impression that the issue is on the way to an amicable settlement. The Association requested a meeting with Chief Rabbi Isaac Nissim to convince him to withhold publication of a new *psak din* signed by 400 Israeli rabbis which states that the dissection of corpses is halachically prohibited except in cases where an immediate life can be saved by performing the dissection; that removing organs and freezing them in "banks" is prohibited; and that

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# Letters to the editor

## Orthodox Modernism

To the Editor:

Just received the Tishrei issue of *The Jewish Observer* and hasten to congratulate you.

Please convey my thanks to Rav Danziger for an excellent article [*Modern Orthodoxy or Orthodox Modernism*]. We need more from him.

[RABBI] MORDECAI GIFTER  
Rosh Yeshiva  
Telshe Yeshiva  
Wickliffe, Ohio

To the Editor:

Among the many fine articles carried by your excellent journal—although it would obviously be risky to assume that every reader will find himself in complete agreement with all of them—I must commend you unreservedly for *Modern Orthodoxy or Orthodox Modernism* by Rabbi Shelomoh E. Danziger (Sept. 1966).

Rabbi Danziger manages clearly to show the important difference between a Weltanschauung firmly grounded in Torah, utilizing all the best of our environment as contributing to this Torah; and an antithetic approach, which apparently seeks basic guidance from man's intellect (perhaps his social instinct?), appropriating such parts of the Torah as appeal to the intellect. The latter approach leads almost inevitably to aberrations such as noted by Rabbi Danziger,

and eventually further. *K'firah* thus varies only quantitatively from positions held earlier.

It is intellectually inconsistent to be 50%, 90%, or 99.99% committed to the Torah. Any Weltanschauung not based on a complete commitment to the Torah, both Written and Oral, is ipso facto a non-Torah Weltanschauung. This imperative can be neglected only at the peril of self-delusion.

Rabbi Danziger has performed a vital service by putting this needed lesson into reasoned words.

DAVID H. ROSENSTOCK  
New York, N. Y.

To the Editor:

Reading and re-reading Rabbi Danziger's article, *Modern Orthodoxy or Orthodox Modernism*, prompts me to question at least one of the writer's conclusions. I find myself in sympathy with most if not all of Rabbi Danziger's observations regarding the tenuousness and vagueness of Dr. Greenberg's "clarifying statement." I deplore articles such as the one by Dr. E. Berkovits in *Tradition* entitled "Orthodox Judaism in a World of Revolutionary Transformations." Articles such as the one referred to should never be addressed to a forum of laymen, but should be addressed to a forum of Torah leaders, if indeed they should be written at all.

Nonetheless, the conclusion of Rabbi Danziger—even if tentative—that fellow

Jews who are observant in practice and whose definition of the right to free enquiry may not coincide with that of Rabbi Danziger or his mentors, should be excluded from the ranks of Orthodoxy, leaves me somewhat aghast.

In our day and age, the many factions and the divisiveness within the numerically insignificant Orthodox camp, are important factors for our relative ineffectiveness to evoke a moral or intellectual response from those of our fellow Jews whose knowledge of Orthodoxy is restricted to the periodical distortions appearing in *Time* magazine. Certainly it would be tragic folly to willfully sever our ties with anyone who cheerfully shouldered *Oi Malchus Shomayim*.

SURELY RABBI DANZIGER deplors the schism that used to exist in the 19th century between Chassidism and Misnagdim? I respectfully submit that Rabbi Danziger's conclusions concerning observant Jews who do not label themselves 'Orthodox,' if carried to their logical end would result in a similar schism with possibly equally tragic consequences.

Chassidism certainly represented an intellectual revolt against the manner in

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which Halachah was then administered; as such it deviated from the accepted norms of Judaism. If in the ensuing dialogue between Chassidism and Misnagdim the latter had remained as sensitive to the large segment of the Jewish masses that were then poised on the brink of despair as they were sensitive to the dangers of false messiahs and fearful of opening the floodgates to new and heretical norms of Judaism, a way might well have been found to avoid this schism and the Haskalah might never have been able to gain a foothold in Eastern Europe.

THE VILIFICATION of men of the calibre of Rabbi Azriel Hildesheimer when he introduced secular teachings in Eisenstadt, as well as the opposition faced by Rabbi Israel Salanter when he developed the Mussar movement, are further examples of well-intentioned efforts to restrict certain men, who, while observant yet attempted by a new methodology to make Orthodoxy relevant within the changed circumstances of a new environment. The fact that history has shown these trail-blazers to have been right in their efforts, should caution us against rash pronouncements as to who is entitled to be part of the Torah camp.

In delineating our exact ideology within the legitimate polar positions within Orthodoxy namely *Satmar* and *Torah Im Derech Eretz*, who can be presumptuous enough to claim that his *shitah* alone represents the one and only *Derech Hayashar*? To suggest, even tentatively, that *Shomrei Mitzvos* who search seriously for a common meeting ground with religiously searching but not yet practicing Jews should be excluded from the Torah camp is hardly the way to be *marbitz Torah*.

ELIAS MUNK  
Ontario, Canada

*Rabbi Danziger replies:*

OBVIOUSLY, divergencies of views are quite in place within Torah Jewry; but I am sure Mr. Munk will agree that there are *some* limits to them. *Ol Malchus Shomayim* includes more than just *Mitzvos Maasiyos*. To reject, directly or by implication, such *Ikkorim* as *Torah Misnadi*, as our Sages formulate them, certainly means stepping outside authentic Judaism, whether one happens to observe the *Mitzvos* in practice or not. The observant Conservative 'rabbi' who refuses to call himself Orthodox as a matter of principle, surely makes himself suspect to say the least.

AS FOR CHASSIDISM, it may well have been saved from developing into an antinomian sect by the very opposition it encountered, which forced a continuous re-assessment of the movement's development by its responsible leaders; as a result, it is today a great force for Orthodox revitalization.

We wish to do the same. We wish to keep all well-intentioned new approaches within the limits, not of our own attitudes but of the *Ikkorim* of authentic Judaism. In this way, the Greenbergs may bring blessing, rather than its opposite, to the ranks of Orthodox Judaism.

To the Editor:

Apropos of "Modern Orthodoxy or Orthodox Modernism" by Rabbi Shelomo Danziger in your September issue, enclosed please find a copy of a letter I sent to Rabbi Irving Greenberg.

MICHAEL KAUFMAN  
Far Rockaway, New York

Dear Yitzchak:

I regret that the circumstances of our meeting at the crowded reception prior to the Torah Umesorah dinner were not the most ideal for the nature of the impromptu discussion we had . . .

Your views and comments on the brief reference I made in my article "The Orthodox Renaissance—Crisis and Challenge," in *Jewish Life* (Sept.-Oct., 1966) to the possibility that the increasing polarization within American Orthodoxy is causing an irreparable schism which may result in the setting up of a new religious movement in the American Jewish community, and that there has been in recent months disturbing foreshadowings concerning the possible creation of an ideological basis for such a movement—are interesting and I should like to comment upon them.

You expressed concern lest your much publicized views on American Orthodoxy and theology and possibly the not dissimilar expressions on the same subjects by others which have been widely circulated of late—be misinterpreted and/or conveniently "categorized" or "pigeonholed" by those Orthodox Jews who disagree (presumably you referred to those further to the Orthodox right)—and thus shut off discussion on the issues. You felt that such discussion as was going on was healthy for Orthodoxy, and such discussion had been part and parcel of Judaism for hundreds of years and, let alone not indicating a possible breaking away which would result in a new Jewish movement, was demonstrative of the inner strength of Orthodoxy today. I believe this is a fair representation of the views you expressed to me.

FIRSTLY, let me assure you—a representative of "The New Left in Orthodoxy"—that it is possibly as much *how* the New Left speaks as much as *what* the New Left says that is strongly resented by those in the mainstream of Orthodoxy. The issue is decidedly not one of stifling anyone; what is resented is the contemptuous tone of the pronouncements of members of the New Left almost as much as what they say; their condescen-



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היה המלה  
היה אהרן והאנטומיה והעיות  
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sion towards those who honestly differ with their views by conveniently and derisively categorizing them as 'fundamentalists,' their breathless approach when they arrive at an old Orthodox concept as if they in their new-found wisdom had discovered America; their free-wheeling blanket condemnations of vital, vibrant, contemporary Orthodoxy as 'sterile,' 'intellectually irrelevant,' 'backwards,' etc.

EXPRESSIONS OF FRESH IDEAS and concepts are constantly welcome with but one very important proviso: if the basic views expressed are not within those broad general terms and bounds acceptable by the Gedolim of the generation as halachicly and theologically sound, continue to express those views if you like, but *do not* (under no circumstances are you permitted to) term these views Orthodox views. No matter how personally observant of the mitzvos the propounder of these views may be, no matter that his basic associations—synagogue, yeshiva, organizations, etc.—are halachicly acceptable Orthodox institutions, if these views go beyond the basic minimums of *emunah* acceptable to a

concensus of the decisive majority of the *Lomday Torah* and those *Hachmay Torah* whose pre-eminence the majority recognizes, they are not Orthodox views, and should be clearly labelled as *non-Orthodox*.

Orthodoxy had no quarrel with Rabbi Louis Jacobs of England, except that he and his views were simply not Orthodox, and Rabbi Jacobs insisted upon calling his views *Orthodox*. This we could not accept nor could we (Chief Rabbi Brodie and the established Orthodox leadership in Great Britain and throughout the Jewish world) permit ourselves to get drawn into the kind of 'dialogue' Rabbi Jacobs so desperately wanted.

Rabbi Emanuel Rackman of this country too has expressed theological concepts in such works as his "Sabbaths and Festivals in the Modern Age," for example, which are rejected as absolutely non-Orthodox by the *Hachmay Torah*. Now, Rabbi Rackman certainly has a right to express and propound these ideas; but what most Orthodox thinkers and intellectuals do not grant, is Rabbi Rackman's right to proclaim these views as *Orthodox views*. This they decidedly are not.

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I should like to clarify here, that when I refer to 'Orthodox thinkers and intellectuals' I do not refer to some wild-eyed 'fanatics' or far-right 'fundamentalists'—the last, the derisive, contemptuous term reserved by the 'liberal' Rabbi Rackman when referring in the above-mentioned work, to Orthodox Jews with whom he disagrees, Jews who, believe it or not, maintain that 'changes (in Halacha) can be made only as the divine sovereign willed them.' (Rabbi Rackman libels all Halachic scholars in the mainstream of Orthodoxy as "fundamentalists . . . united in their reluctance to probe the values implicit in the Halachic texts." His teleological approach, while accepting the "revealed character of both the Written and the Oral Law" and rejecting "the approach of the Reformers [as] . . . equally unsatisfactory" to that of the 'fundamentalists,' proposes that the Halachic scholar proceed and change or modernize the Halacha by first applying the principle: "What are the ends of the Law which G-d or nature ordained, and how can we be guided by these ideal ends in developing the Law?")

They are men of the yeshiva, rabbinic, and intellectual worlds, who are both learned in Torah and intellectually acculturated. Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik, for example, clearly rejects Rabbi Rackman's 'teleological' approach — despite Rabbi Rackman's incredible assertion in the above-mentioned study that "the teleological approach is to be found at its best in the work of Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik"—and Rabbi Soloveitchik insists on a purely objective approach to Halacha in such works as his *Hesped* over the *Brisker Rav* (*Zeh Dodi!*) and in his *Ish Hahalacha*.

THOSE CRITICAL OF THE VIEWS OF the New Left are not heresy-hunters. They welcome honest dialogue and discussion between Orthodox men of good will. But "dialogue" firstly presupposes two-way conversation, and not articles or speeches on vital theological subjects for

general consumption by the Jewish public, frequently by individuals who would much prefer such *monologues* to serious discussion with those who could reply point by point to statements made. While I would personally consider it presumptuous of Orthodox Jewish intellectuals who may have had . . . a few *blatt Gemorrah* under their belts, who may or may not have *smicha*, to take on the *Hachmay Torah*—the Gedolim of our generation—in serious discussion on vital theological issues, such discussion, perhaps on a different level, should be healthy, and should certainly begin.

You mentioned that no one is trying to start a break-away movement from Orthodoxy. I feel quite certain that this is not a motive of yours. But are you so sure about the other members of the New Left? Have you read carefully their pronouncements in recent months? I am not as sanguine as you about such a new movement. I, for one, have not the slightest doubt that it is coming—and that its formation will take place before the decade is out. I can see it embracing—and being embraced by—a substantial portion of the Orthodox (RCA) rabbinate, especially those rabbis in synagogues officially affiliated with the Conservative United Synagogue of America (some 50 to 100) and those [rabbis in synagogues] without minimum Halachic requirements such as *mechitza* (some 150 to 250).

This will be a natural outgrowth of the kind of undisciplined, unplanned, not-carefully-thought-out public statement which, when reported in the press, has at worst been misleading many Orthodox Jews, and has at best been misinterpreted—and such misinterpretations uncorrected—so as to mislead those not completely informed.

Unlike previous years, when Orthodoxy in America was locked in a struggle for survival with the forces of Conservatism and Reform, the latter are no longer dangerous to Orthodoxy. They have shown their bankruptcy as expressions of perversions of Judaism, and it

is today becoming more and more apparent what Orthodox Jews have known all along—that Conservatism and Reform would de-Judaize and by imitating the religions of the majority culture lead to total assimilation into that culture. And, importantly, they would sanctify transgression on the part of the Divine teaching: and Reform and Conservatism thus served as the vehicles in which transgressions became sanctified.

There are today many thousands of non-observant Orthodox Jews, who are nevertheless committed to genuine Orthodox values who would welcome a new movement which would so-to-speak sanctify their transgressions, and there are many thousands of observant Orthodox Jews in this country who are committed to the Shabbos and the Halacha in general in so superficial a sense that they would also be receptive to a 'New Orthodoxy' led by individuals of intellectual stature. While they may be incapable of grasping the world of the intellectual they will certainly grasp the popularization of his words, which will mean nothing less than breaking their commitment. This latter group is giving its sons and daughters to yeshivos and is developing along healthy lines. A branching off from Orthodoxy into a new movement is something we can ill afford today.

THE PRESENT IMMINENT and critical danger for the very existence of Torah Judaism in America, therefore, lies not in Reform or Conservatism, Yitzchak, but within Orthodoxy, or at least among those nominally Orthodox Jews whose thinking is not, but who persist in labeling their non-Orthodox views as Orthodox, when, in fact, the consensus of the *Hachmay Torah* is that such expressions are foreign to Judaism. Orthodoxy must be indeed watchful and alert, to spot those who would willfully or unwittingly, rip asunder the very fabric of genuine Torah values, for herein lies the danger to our continued viability.

With best wishes and kindest personal regards, I remain,

Sincerely,

MICHAEL KAUFMAN

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### "Technical Error"

The words "technical error" often attempt to disguise a human error by blaming it on machines, or someone else. In our November issue, under the heading EMPHASIS . . . OURS, the columns of type were transposed in the process of placing the pages on the press. We deeply regret this error and will be happy to send a correct reprint of the article upon request.

## Hebrew Pronunciation

To the Editor:

A serious problem facing Jewish parents is to provide proper and educational type entertainment for our children. It is therefore extremely disappointing to find that most children's long playing records have Sefardic pronunciation, especially those with religious type content. Just because Sefardic is the pronunciation in Israel today it is by no means the pronunciation of our ancestors. In fact I am far from convinced that Sefardic was the original pronunciation in the days of *Tenach*.

It is argued that because the near eastern Jews have Sefardic pronunciation and because Sefardic is close to Arabic, and it is assumed that Arabic 'probably' hasn't changed much over the centuries, therefore the original pronunciation was Sefardic. To answer this fallacy; it is an observed fact that local Jews assimilate their pronunciation with their environmental tongue. This can readily be observed from the East Europeans, the Galitzianers and the English Jews, all of whom wandered from their Saxon surroundings around the Middle Ages, and all of whom assimilated their Hebrew pronunciation in various degrees. And then, if the assumption is correct that Arabic didn't change its pronunciation, is it just to interpolate language pronunciations? Perhaps *Tenach* Hebrew should be extrapolated from the Arabic! An example of the latter would be Dutch and German, both are Saxon in origin

but the former is full of guttural and soft sounds as compared with its sister tongue, German, which is harsh and clamoring and has no gutturals. A clear case of extrapolation, not interpolation. Therefore, let us remain with our

proper and own Ashkenazic pronunciation so it may be said of us "and they changed not their tongues" (*Velo Shinnuh es Leshounom*).

OSCAR M. LEHMANN  
Brooklyn, N. Y.

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## News of Agudath Israel

### 45th Annual Dinner Slated for February 26

The 45th Anniversary Dinner of Agudath Israel of America will take place on Sunday evening, February 26 in the Hotel New Yorker, New York City. The occasion will mark almost a half century of activity of the American Agudah organization in every part of the world for the furtherance of Torah sovereignty in Jewish life, through a broad range of constructive projects. The elite of American Orthodoxy is expected to attend this celebration.

### Agudath Israel Warns N.Y.C. Board of Education

A spokesman for Agudath Israel of America, testifying at a hearing on November 14th called by the Board of Education of New York City, charged the Board with "harassing the non-public schools." The hearing had been called to consider new proposals which would have cut back benefits to non-private schools from Title I programs of the federal education-aid law.

The Agudist spokesman warned that unless the attempts to restrict aid to non-public school children are halted, the organization will call for a public Congressional investigation. The Board of Education subsequently adopted a compromise program.

### National Bnos Convention Adopts New Program

The second annual national convention of Bnos Agudath Israel of America,

which was held over the weekend of November 18-20 in Bradley Beach, New Jersey, adopted a broad range of programs for expanding the work of the Agudist girls' organization. 300 delegates, active Bnos group leaders, participated in the convention.

The main speaker was Rabbi Chaim Nussbaum, noted scholar and principal of the Yeshiva Eitz Chaim of Toronto. Among the other speakers were Rabbi Shmuel Bloom of the Ner Israel Yeshiva of Baltimore, Rabbi Yechiel Perr, Rabbi Joshua Silbermintz, Rabbi Yosef Mitnick, and Rabbi Boruch Borchardt.

Mrs. Belle Young offered greetings in behalf of N'shei Agudath Israel. Out-of-town greetings were brought by Esther Amsel of Boston, Chavy Greenberg of Chicago, Chaya Berger of Cleveland, Shoshana Schiffeldrin of Baltimore, and Reva Kormin of Toronto. Marilyn Friedman was chairman of the convention committee. Miss Esther Oelbaum is national president of Bnos, and Eliza Besser is secretary of the Bnos Council.

### Agudah Leader at White House Education Ceremony

Rabbi Moshe Sherer, executive vice-president of Agudath Israel of America participated, at the invitation of President Johnson, in a ceremony on November 3rd at the White House, when the new education bills passed by Congress were signed by the President. Agudath Israel has been active on Capitol Hill regarding federal aid to education legislation since 1960.

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## \$100 Membership Campaign



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Since its inception, Chinuch Atzmai was faced with the question: "Can we keep pace with the growth of the country? Can we expand quickly enough to provide a Torah education for the tens of thousands of children who would otherwise be lost to Torah?"

Today, Chinuch Atzmai faces a new question — one more challenging and even more basic:

### "Can Chinuch Atzmai survive?"

Israel is today gripped by a severe economic crisis which has compelled its leadership to make emergency loans. Some municipalities are on the verge of bankruptcy because of the existing inflation. The grave effect of the soaring cost of living upon Chinuch Atzmai is best told by the sharp rise of the monthly payroll for the staff of 1,800 teachers and administrators, as indicated by the following monthly statistics:

1962 —	\$138,300 Monthly
1963 —	148,300 Monthly
1964 —	198,300 Monthly
1965 —	253,300 Monthly
1966 —	333,300 Monthly

Chinuch Atzmai — its 243 schools and 45,000 students — is the stronghold of Torah today, and its hope for tomorrow. Can we permit Chinuch Atzmai to flounder?

Hagaon Reb Aharon Kotler, זצ"ל, during his final visit to Eretz Yisroel exclaimed, "Our greatest deficit is the 50,000 more children we could save for Torah if we only had the classrooms for them!"

These stirring words continue to challenge us. But in the meantime, the 45,000 children who have already made Chinuch Atzmai a vital part of their lives may wake up one school day, and find that there no longer is a Chinuch Atzma. This we must never let happen.

### The Call and Message of the Gedolei Torah



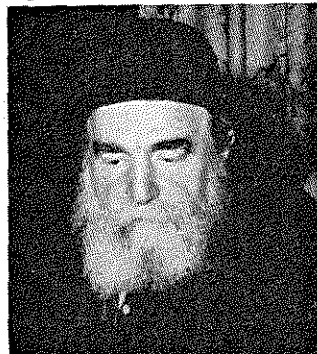
HAGAON REB YECHESKEL ABRAMSKY

CHINUCH ATZMAI is the guarantor and is responsible for Torah in Israel. Religious Jews throughout the world must unite in a massive effort to strengthen this great Torah Chinuch movement.



THE GERER REBBE

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HAGAON REB MOSHE FEINSTEIN

In the name of the Gedolei Torah and Roshei Yeshiva, I proclaim this \$100 Membership Campaign a sacred obligation for everyone of our people, to give CHINUCH ATZMAI a firm base of support.

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