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Toward a Topical
Approach to Jewish History
for the
Junior High School Department of
The Reform Religious School.

by: Bernard S. Frank

Thesis submitted in partial
fulfillment of requirements
for the Master of Arts in
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Referee:

Dr. Sylvan Schwartzman

Digest of Thesis

"Toward a Topical Approach to Jewish History for the Junior High School Department of the Reform Religious School," is an attempt to create a new approach to the study of Jewish history in the one-day-a-week Reform Jewish religious school. It has as its purpose the development of certain topics throughout history, rather than a systematic approach to one. In a rabbinical thesis by Arnold Kaiman in 1957 ("A Critical Evaluation of the Teaching of Chronological Jewish History in the Intermediate Grades of the Reform Religious Schools"), it was shown that the texts utilized in our religious schools for the teaching of Jewish history are not adequate.

In an effort to improve this situation and deal with the needs of the Reform high schooler, the basis for this text was devised, centering around such subjects as: "Judaism as a Process of Change," "Anti-Semitism as a Process of Change," "The Prophetic Movement as a Process of Change," "Judaism's Attitude Toward Proselytes," "Jewish Communal Organizations," and "The Institutions of Prayer in Judaism as a Process of Change."

Each of the six chapters of this thesis follow the development of "Judaism as a Process of Change." The purpose ^{being} to show that all of life (including religion and education) goes through a "process of change." Likewise, Judaism, its history and religious practices all go through a "process of change." Each ^{chapter} traces a

given phenomenon throughout Jewish history. For example, in the chapter on Anti-Semitism, the problem is traced through the Medieval Period, and the reasons for the outbreak of Anti-Semitism in various European countries ~~are~~ discussed.

The chapter on the prophetic movement traces the development of the universal God concept from Amos to the Second Isaiah; while the unit on "Judaism's Attitude toward Proselytes -- A Unique Concept in Judaism" shows that for the most part Judaism never really had a program of seeking converts. It discusses how the ideology concerning converts to Judaism underwent a "process of change" throughout history.

In "Jewish Communal Organizations" we see how Jewish communities were able to survive through periods of persecution, this survival being a direct result of their communal organizations which made the Jews a closely knit unit enabling them to resist all outside influences.

In another section of this thesis, "The Institutions of Prayer in Judaism as a Process of Change," we trace the development of prayer throughout Jewish history, from the sacrifices in the Temple to the ^{and these} Tefilah birkom Korban of the exile, to the modern day prayer book.

Lastly, we have attempted to answer the question, why study history that is four thousand years old? The answer is that all of history contributes to modern day life. What we have today is merely the continuation of what was begun many years ago.

Dedicated to my devoted wife Toby, whose encouragement never ceases; to my beloved parents, who never tired of providing me with the means and the ambition for education; and to my dear son Robert, who in his own sweet way has been a source of joy and support.

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CHAPTER I

JUSTIFICATION

"Only the lesson which is enjoyed can be learned well."

Judah ha Nasi

Since 1923 the Union of American Hebrew Congregations has advocated the systematic approach to the teaching of Jewish history. Arnold Kaiman, in his rabbinic thesis, (A Critical Evaluation of the Teaching of Chronological Jewish History in the Intermediate Grades of the Reform Religious School) attempts to evaluate the effects of this system in the Reform religious school. Though Rabbi Kaiman's study is the first comprehensive approach to the problem, it is not the first time the problem has received attention from educators. A. N. Dushkin, as far back as 1918, doubted the validity and effectiveness of such a technique in the intermediate department.¹ Dr. Dushkin's answer to the problem was to arrange the teaching of history into concentric cycles, presenting these cycles three times during the entire religious school experience for the student. First, he suggested that the lower grades be instructed in history through folk tales. Second, he recommended the teaching of history to the middle grades by hero tales. In the upper grades, the third cycle would be an approach to history by means of a central theme throughout Jewish history.

Dr. Dushkin's awareness of the ineffectiveness of teaching systematic Jewish history may have been the earliest insight into

the problem; it was by no means the last.² The problem of how much our students are learning in their classrooms has constantly concerned the educator. In 1935 at the Tri-State Jewish Religious School Teachers' Conference in Indianapolis, the problem again was discussed by Rabbi Robert Kahn. History, up to this point, "had been treated as a vast chronological series of names and dates and pogroms to be studied and learned."³ Jewish educators have always agreed that the teaching of Jewish history in religious schools is essential, but they have often wondered how effective it has been. "Although the teaching of history is probably the major activity of the Reform religious school, one may question as to how much knowledge of Jewish history our students have at the time of graduation. Although we have improved techniques, have introduced better text books, have used the project plan and other modern devices, it is very doubtful whether we 'are putting history across.'" (sic)⁴ This statement made almost twenty-five years ago is as valid today as it was then. Rabbi Kahn in attempting to solve the problem suggested the following: "What is needed is an approach that begins, not with the earliest date or event in Jewish history, but with the pupil himself. What is needed is a history curriculum that grows out of modern Jewish life; a history curriculum that motivates the pupil to feel the problems of today and to want to solve them."⁵

For Rabbi Kahn, knowledge alone is not sufficient. He suggests a curriculum that would emerge out of the modern life of the students.

He believes that history must be life-centered and it must be of interest to the pupil. It is a known fact that, "when a child has a positive attitude....when he is enthusiastic, he learns more and his knowledge increases."⁶ What we want to avoid is the feeling among the students that the present history they are studying is merely a repetition of what they have had ever since they began their formal religious school training. To avoid this we must select areas of history which can be presented to a student in a most interesting way; not ~~merely~~ a table of chronologically arranged dates or names, but rather ideas ~~from~~ which the student can begin to understand the phenomenon of the history of his people. This idea can be utilized in all departments of the religious school with the curriculum scaled for each level.⁷ This approach has as its thesis the method which would secure the interest of the pupil first, thus preparing him for the factual material that is to follow. The idea is to make history a living, continual process; not just an uninteresting, drab presentation of what happened to the ancient Hebrews.

It seems incomprehensible that an approach to Jewish history in the Reform religious school, such as the one by Rabbi Kahn twenty-five years ago, did not take hold. However, if it had, then our students would have been more familiar with the history of our people through a topical approach; an approach which would have stimulated their interest.

Today in our religious schools we are still attempting to teach

systematic Jewish history. History, as it is now taught in the intermediate grades, is way beyond the child's maturation level and needs.⁸ Dr. Sylvan Schwartzman, who maintains that Jewish history taught on a systematic level is of little value, is opposed by Dr. Emanuel Gamoran, one of the advocates of the systematic teaching of Jewish history. Gamoran's reason being that a child must be taught in a chronological way, a selected group of facts essential to Jewish history.⁹ This controversy, "is not just a new discussion concerning Schwartzman's monograph position on history.....This controversy, as regards chronological, topical, problematic, or project approaches to history, stems from the very roots of organized Jewish education in the United States. And yet this controversy is not just a part of the Jewish realm in education. This disagreement regarding the methodology of teaching history to our youngsters has been going on in public education for years.....If the controversy is pronounced in the field of secular five-day-a-week education to which the child is exposed to history five times as much as in the Sunday or one-day-a-week religious school, then there must be a pronounced controversy."¹⁰ (sic)

Teaching of Jewish history presents a problem to which Arnold Kaiman devoted his research for his rabbinical thesis.

This author, aware of the problem, not only through observation but through actual experience as a student and teacher in the one-day-a-week Reform religious school, is making an attempt in this thesis to improve the situation for the Reform^{Junior} high school^{students}. The

purpose of teaching Jewish history should not have as its purpose the accumulation of facts and names in chronological order, but should have as its goal understanding. An understanding of and a desire to know, "How ~~is it~~ I am what I am?"

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER I

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2. For a full discussion of the various attempts to solve the problem of teaching Jewish history see the thesis of Arnold Kaiman, A Critical Evaluation of the Teaching of Chronological Jewish History In The Intermediate Grades Of The Reform Religious School, (H. U. C. - J. I. R., Cincinnati, 1957) p. 22 ff.
3. Kahn, Robert I., "A Problem Approach to The Teaching of Jewish History," (Jewish Education, Volume 7), Chicago, 1935, p. 51.
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CHAPTER II

JUDAISM AS A PROCESS OF CHANGE

"Judaism which served us so well in the past, will serve us equally well in the future. It will promote the cause of truth, the cause of progress, and of the modern spirit."

Gustav Karpeles

Understanding "Process" and "Change"

It is a simple task for us as modern American Jews to understand, "Judaism as a process of Change," if we are able to relate it to our own lives. However, before we begin we have to understand the implications of the words "process" and "change".

"Process" is a simple word. Our education is a process that takes many years, and involves not only what we learn in school, but also what we learn from our environment, our parents, our friends, and from the world in general. Process is one of the elements in our lives which contributes to our education.

"Change" is another basic word in our vocabulary. For the purpose of this thesis we shall define it as the process of alteration and variation. Ten years ago it used to take an airplane over ten hours to fly from New York City to Los Angeles. Today, in the "jet age", flying time has been shortened to less than half. We can say there has been a change in our travel which has come about because of the process used to improve piston-driven engines that gradually gave way to the jet engine.

Changes in a Lifetime

We are surely able to see and recognize change in our own lifetime; in our family, in our community, in our nation and in our world. Right now we are participants in the greatest process of change mankind has experienced since the invention of the wheel.

Stop and observe the changes that have taken place in and around your community. New office buildings have been erected, and educational institutions have expanded. In short, your community has taken on a new face. In the suburbs you may notice that new expressways have been constructed to relieve the traffic congestion.

Educators have not only found it a necessity to alter the edifice, but have been compelled to make changes in the school curriculum, and in their teaching techniques. Your older brother or sister will tell you they never had some of the subjects you are taking or you may notice that your younger brother's education in school seems to differ from your own. World wide there has also been changes within the short span of our lifetime. The map of the world has undergone a process of change. The United States map shows fifty states instead of the forty-eight states of a few years ago. The map of Europe and Asia has changed drastically since the end of World War II. Changes have occurred in the boundaries of India, Korea, China, Germany, and of course Russia.

Thus far, we have been speaking of the process of change in general. Let us now be more specific. We can assume that if

changes such as we have noticed have occurred in the world, then there must have been changes in religion---particularly Judaism. Now, we are able to understand our chapter title, "Judaism as a Process of Change."

Changes in the Religion of Judaism

The religion of Judaism did not come into being overnight. It has gone through processes of change and modifications.

We can be sure that our great religion did not exist three thousand years ago as it does today. History and our own lives have shown us that ideas and institutions are not spontaneously created. We are also aware of the fact that once these ideas and institutions are formed they do not remain stationary. Sometimes they progress, other times regress. Religion also follows this plan or procedure, its ideas grow and become more involved. This can easily be pointed out by citing two examples. Each of these will prove that Judaism, as a religion, has not remained permanent, but has been a process of change.

New Ceremonies

To prove that religion is constantly changing, we will first look at the festival of Pesach (or Passover).

How many of us realize that Pesach (or Passover) is made up of two ancient festivals? Yes, that is right. Pesach is made up of two ancient festivals---The Festival of the Shepherds and an

¹
Agricultural Festival. These were both Spring Festivals and were celebrated previous to the Exodus from Egypt. Before the sojourn² in Egypt Jewish life consisted mainly of tribal communities and of wanderings as shepherds. Their spring festival served as the means of ushering in the new season. On this occasion they would sacrifice a sheep or a goat.

As we have learned from our historical texts, the ancient Jews ceased to be nomads who wandered from place to place looking for a site to pasture their flock. They began to settle the land of³ Palestine. This did not stop them from celebrating their familiar spring festival, which they had brought with them.

Now, we are confronted with the "process of change" in a religious ceremony. As the people began to settle land the ceremonies of worship changed. Those Jews who earned their livelihood from the soil also had an Agricultural Festival⁴ that they celebrated in the Spring time of the year. This festival was linked to the harvest of grain. It is here that we get the name The Festival of Matzos (unleavened bread).

A further step in the "process of change" in this religious ceremony begins with the Exodus. The ancient festival of the nomads and the farmers now becomes an historically important festival, and this characteristic will make it endure. All the rituals of the two festivals were given new meaning as signified by the various symbols utilized at the Seder. It became a festival for all, in that it symbolized man's quest for ultimate freedom.

New Prayerbooks

Another illustration that Judaism has undergone revision is by noting and studying the history and the development of the Prayerbook. Naturally it is difficult for us to realize that the Prayer Book we use in Temple today has not always been in its present form.

If you refer to the title page of the Union Prayer Book⁵ you will notice several items. First, it is published by the Central Conference of American Rabbis and is the official prayer book of the Reform movement of Judaism. Secondly, you would see the words, "Newly Revised Edition," noting that an earlier unrevised edition existed prior to 1940. This earlier edition was called the⁶ "Revised Edition." Here too is evidence which tells us that this Prayer Book was a revised edition of an earlier Prayer Book and that the idea of prayer worship and the format of the services were changed or altered as of 1922. Finally, we arrive at the original Union Prayer Book published in 1895. The Prayer Book that we are using today has undergone three "processes of change."⁷ Needless to say, that in a few years, the Prayer Book will be published in⁸ another newly revised edition. Each of these revisions were precipitated by the spiritual needs of the worshippers.

Don't think for a moment that 1895 marked the beginning of prayer books. No, their history goes back much farther than the end of the nineteenth century.

It is difficult for us to say just exactly when the prayer

book came into use in Jewish worship, but we can make an assumption. We can assume first that prayer as a means of worshiping God came into being after the destruction of the First Temple.⁹

During the days of the First and Second Temples, we have learned that there were very elaborate sacrifices throughout the day---in the morning, in the afternoon, and in the evening. This was the way that the people of ancient Palestine sought to please their God.

This proved to be successful as long as they resided in Palestine, and as long as they had a Temple. In 586 B. C. E. the Temple was destroyed by the Babylonians and the people were exiled. What were they to do? No longer would they be able to offer sacrifices to God. It would seem that all was lost for the people and their God.

But here we also find the "process of change". The idea of how to worship God had to be modified, and this is what the prophets Jeremiah and Second Isaiah proceeded to do, by telling the people that all was not lost. They would still be able to worship Yahweh (as they called their God) in Babylonia.¹⁰ The people, even though they trusted their prophets, could not comprehend what they were trying to convey. How could they worship with the Temple destroyed and in a strange land? Prayer was their answer, and they could substitute prayer for the three daily sacrifices. "tefillah binkom korban"---"Prayer in place of sacrifice" was the solution.

Gradually prayer books were introduced to give order to the

service. The oldest prayer book from which all others stem is the¹¹ prayer book of Rav Amram, that contains all the prayers that were customarily said in the academies of Babylonia between the eighth and tenth centuries. It contains not only prayers but also regulations for the various services and how they are to be performed.

¹²
From this the prayer book took on two forms; one prayer book was developed in Ashkenazic ritual and one in the Sephardic ritual. (Ashkenazic referring to the ritual for Eastern Jewry and Sephardic referring to the Jews of Spain.) The influence of local areas played a tremendous role in the development of the prayer books. The prayer books were constantly being revised. At times everyone did not agree on how rituals were to be conducted. There were very heated arguments, before a ritual would be unanimously accepted.

After a long "process of change" in the prayer book itself; after many editions, we arrive at the first Reform Prayer Book. Naturally, this had to happen in Hamburg, Germany, where Reform (or Liberal) Judaism originated. Once again we see that Judaism in revising the Prayer Book conforms to the needs of the people. The Hamburg Prayer Book, as this version was called, introduced the translation of the Hebrew prayers into the vernacular in this case German.¹³ It also made several basic changes: 1) either it eliminated references to sacrifice or expressed it in such a manner as to indicate that these events took place in the past; 2) it changed the idea of a personal messiah to hope in a Messianic Age

for all; and 3) it omitted all references to the national restoration in Palestine.¹⁴ From these three examples we note how the first liberal movement of Jews attempted to fit traditional Judaism to a way of life for their own times.

In America, too, with the introduction of Reform Judaism by Isaac Mayer Wise, there had to be a prayer book to fit the needs of the Jew. Many Rabbis wrote their own services using original ideas of how a Reform prayer book should be.¹⁵ Finally, after many years of using diversified books such as Wise's Minhag America, and David Einhorn's Orath Tamid, the first Union Prayer Book was printed. Though it departed from the traditional service it still kept the general outline of the traditional service. The principal points omitted were: 1) all references to sacrifices; 2) references to resurrection, replacing this with the idea of immortality of the soul; 3) restoration of a Jewish State; 4) repetition of prayers; 5) references to angels and miracles, and 6) personal Messiah, replaced by the Messianic Age.

In addition to these there were several other changes worthy of our notice: 1) translation of Hebrew prayers into English; 2) shortening of Scriptural readings; 3) sermons were incorporated into every service; 4) and modern prayers were inserted to take the place of the omitted prayers.¹⁶

The prayer book has developed as Judaism has developed. It is never complete, but will always be subject to change as it has in the past. The prayer book always reflects the life of its people,

whether it be during periods of mysticism, philosophic speculation or in times of tragedy.

Thus, one may draw an analogy between Judaism and the prayer book in that both are undergoing changes constantly. In the chapters that follow we will see how this "process of change" is found in every aspect of Judaism throughout its history.

Judaism as a religion like all aspects of life has undergone a transformation. Nothing in the world remains stationary; there is always development and improvement. The old must eventually give way to the new.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER II

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16. Ibid., p. 277.

CHAPTER III

ANTI-SEMITISM AS A "PROCESS OF CHANGE"

"Anti-Semitism diverts men from the real tasks confronting them. It diverts them from the true causes of their woes."

J. Maritain

How People Begin to Hate

"Hatred" is defined in the Oxford Dictionary as a "condition¹ or state of relations in which one person hates another." This is a state of condition in which one person detests or despises another individual, and this hatred can grow in certain individuals because they may feel they are superior to another person. Once this hatred is slanted, it usually continues to grow, and manifests itself in different ways.

We are not born with hatred or prejudice, likes or dislikes. To the newborn everything exists on equal grounds. One may compare this to a blackboard which remains blank until someone writes on it. This is the way hatred is inserted into the mind of an innocent child. The child knows nothing about hatred or prejudice. As the child grows so does this seed of hatred. No child has ever been born to hate or to be bigoted. Every new born baby comes into this world a "blank blackboard" with regard to hatred. This blackboard attracts opinion, ideas, likes, and dislikes very rapidly---almost as a magnet attracts certain metallic objects. This new addition to mankind is anxious to acquire knowledge, to understand the world.

He wants to investigate every new item, every new word. Because of this eagerness, this desire to learn about the world, adults are able to fill up this blank board.

This is easily understood if we realize that opinions which are held by adults^{often} originated² in the first six years of life. They maintain these attitudes and by the time they become twelve years old they have become instilled within them. From twelve to eighteen they become solid opinions, as if they were their own, derived out of their own experiences. Anti-Jewish, anti-Catholic, and anti-Negro feelings are developed in this manner.

Now we may ask ourselves, why we in the United States are concerned with anti-Semitism? We may question whether or not anti-Semitism exists today, at least in America. For the most part, it does exist. There has not been too much in the news about anti-Semitism, we only read about it from time to time. Yet these scattered examples and incidents remind us very vividly that anti-Semitism is still in existence.

A few years ago, in the state of New Jersey, such an incident occurred. This story was told by an Anti-Defamation League investigator.³ This anti-Semitic outbreak happened to a Jewish family, who had been living in the area of southeastern New Jersey on a poultry farm, since coming to this country ten years ago. For most of this period they had lived there without any noted distinction. They were not American in appearance, but rather typically European. They spoke with heavy accents, their physical features were differ-

ent, but nevertheless, the people of the community for the most part were very cordial. "Hello, Mr. _____. How are you today? Nice weather we are having." Such was their existence in this quiet community. Mr. _____, did very well in his occupation and was able to save a large sum of money. His was the typical success story of a simple immigrant, who came to the United States and proved this was the land of opportunity.

After about eight years Mr. _____ decided he would like to expand his business interests. He wanted to open a small piece -- goods store on the corner of his property. This was when his troubles began. The people in the community did not want this for some insignificant reasons. Finally, they resorted to anti-Semitic attacks. They hurled stones and insults at the man, his wife and children. So bad were their attacks---that Mr. _____ pulled up stakes, left the land of opportunity and moved to Israel. The Anti-Defamation League investigator in his findings could not trace any logical reason why after so many years of peaceful existence in a small community such an incident would occur.

Our purpose here is not to try and analyze how or why the above incident happened. It merely is inserted here to point out the fact that anti-Semitism, for the most part, is spontaneous in nature. As we continue our study of a given period, we will see the formation of certain patterns which lead to anti-Semitism; this pattern centering around the economy. Perhaps this was the reason also in New Jersey.

Origin of Anti-Semitism.

Anti-Semitism is a phenomenon not unique to our own times. Before looking at anti-Semitism over a given period in history, I think it is essential that we understand the term anti-Semitism and its origins. Anti-Semitism as a word first appeared in Germany at the close of a financial panic between 1870-71. It was coined by a man named Wilhelm Marr, a converted Jew.⁴ This does not necessarily mean that attacks on Jews began at this time, but rather this is the first time the movement was given a name. This term gave strength to hate-mongers. It provided them with an attractive catch word for their program of hate. Since 1870 the term has been used for the movement which has had as its sole purpose the intent to degrade the Jew to a position of inferiority all over the world. Its objective has been to hinder the relationship between Jews and non-Jews and to deny the Jew economic, political, and religious rights.

There are a number of specifics which could be listed as possible reasons for anti-Semitic attacks. (1) Traditional ill-feelings -- this is the oldest of all Jewish hostility; (2) charges of alienation -- that Jews cannot be loyal to their country because they must, through their heritage, be loyal to Palestine; (3) Religious differences; (4) Jews cling to their identity; (5) ignorance of Jews and their religion is the most common; and (6) jealousy of economic success.⁵ These are just a few of the specifics which have led to anti-Semitic feeling over the past

three or four thousand years.

No matter what period in history you choose to analyze, in attempting to find some reason for anti-Semitism, the answer will always be the same. This would certainly be true if you were to make a study of anti-Semitism in Egypt at the time of Moses; in Palestine at the time of Jesus Christ; in Alexandria during the period of Philo and even in the period of Hitler's attempted world conquest. Pick any century, any outburst of hatred for Jews, in any area, and you will see that every incident can always be linked to economic unrest. This can best be explained by taking an entire period and analyzing it. To illustrate this, let us take the Medieval period and observe how the Jews ~~perished~~. Perhaps we will be able to create a pattern which will help us to understand anti-Semitism throughout Jewish history.

6

Anti-Semitism in the Medieval Period.

This investigation deals with Jewish history from England at the time of William the Conqueror until 1391 in Spain when a strong anti-Semitic element broke out as a result of the weakness in the economic structure.

When the feudal system began in England, it could already boast of a long history from France. Feudalism was brought to England by William the Conqueror in its highest state. After conquering England he divided the land and parceled it out to various overlords. As a result of this he created a perfect feudal hierarchy

with himself as King.

Not only did he bring feudalism with him, but also Jews. They were to be used in England in the same capacity that they were used in France. The Jews came primarily from Normandy and were for the most part commercial or financial merchants. They were to set up the monetary system of England. In order for the Jews to accomplish this William had to give them special privileges. Jews were always given special privileges when their services were needed. The Jews of England would now be able to serve the King in a number of ways: money lending, mortgages, and tax collecting. The Jews were directly under the power of the King. Very often, as a result of the tremendous amount of friction between King and noblemen, and amongst the nobles, the Jews were utilized with their tremendous funds as financial wedges. The Jews dealt directly with the King; they had no dealings with the nobles. This all took place around the twelfth century.

It is primarily about this time that the fall of Jewish prestige began in England. In order to get the full picture we have to establish a starting point---The First Crusade (about 1095 or 6). The Crusades grew out of the feudal structure in the following way. The land was parceled out in Europe to various lords. As the years went by many, many sons were born to these lords; more than the land could support. This left a lot of boys around with nothing to do---hence they went after the land of the Turks. They wanted to obtain for themselves wealth from this surplus producing area.

They attempted this with the masses from the lower classes. How was this accomplished? What was the incentive to fight for so little a reward while the nobles got rich? They found a single bond - Christ.

At this time the church was on the move for power. Under Gregory VII in the eleventh century great strides were made in organization. Later Pope Innocent II latched on to the opportunities offered the church by these young lords of France to proclaim a crusade. Each group had its own goal in the crusade. The lords wanted wealth; the church wanted more power; and the poor masses wanted forgiveness of sins (this was the bribe offered them by the lords). The religious ideology of a united bond "Christ" was now put to the test. It joined lord with serf in a so called "common cause".

Now that we have the picture of this common bond we will be able to discuss how the crusade became a method of Jewish persecution.

Now back to the English scene under William the Conqueror. By the end of the First Crusade the Jews had amassed a large number of promissory notes (on money they loaned). The King began to see the danger - the Jews were in control of too much wealth. He was worried, even though they were a tremendous source of income for him. The Jews also had the feeling they were caught with the goods---they owned too much land and the King was fearful that they would take over. The King had to get out of this predicament.

The best way for the King to escape this was to utilize the same technique that got him into this trouble---the charter. When the Jews first came to England the King had to give them a special charter of privileges---to equate the Jews to the nobles. Now all he had to do was to change the charter from a positive to a negative tone. That is, the charter was given because Jews needed protection, but they didn't really deserve it. The King utilizing this line of argument could now say -- that the Jews are doing something he never intended, that is, the Jews were taking over too much of the land. Now the King was able to change the whole concept of the charter. The Jews were now downgraded to a level below the nobles because they violated the King's trust.

Because of the declining structure of feudalism in England, the King had another way open for him to get rid of the vast debts he owed the Jews. When the ^{economic} surplus began to decline someone had to give in a little. Naturally the King did not want to. He wanted to live the same so he "passed the buck" to the nobles, who in turn gave it to the serfs. The Jew was gradually reduced from high financiers to petty pawn brokers serving the needs of the serfs. The serfs, because the bulk of the declining surplus was passed to them, had to work that much harder to please the nobles who in turn had to get the King's favor. They (the serfs) had to borrow money from the Jewish pawn brokers. They became very much indebted to the Jews. A revolt against the King was sure to take place, so the King now needed a diversion.

A return to the ideology of the crusade to unite serf and lord was the answer. Jews were taking over the land was their claim. The economy was declining, and as a result the Jew was a scapegoat.

Anti-Semitism now flourished. It was not new. Anti-Semitism was always latent. When the Jews could be of use anti-Semitism was temporarily forgotten.

The serfs had to be united with the lords against the Jews, who had taken advantage of the King's good will. They were called Christ-killers, well-poisoners, ritual murderers, and other undesirable names. The clergy constantly reminded the serf of the treacherous Jew.

Now, because the Jews were ^{allegedly} misbehaving, the King had a second way of canceling debts because of Jewish ingratitude. He canceled his own debts and those of the nobles, which the Jews held. The process of downgrading was completed. This gave the King that much more ~~wealth~~ ^{than} the nobles. By the end of the thirteenth century Jews were virtually kicked out of England.

In Europe things were not going well for the Jews. The church under Innocent III, who followed Gregory VII, had grown to be a tremendous power.

Innocent III issued a decree against Jews to wear a badge of shame. It was at this time that the doctrine of the wine and the wafer was adopted by the Church as the body and blood of Christ. The decrees of Innocent III were utilized only in areas where the economy was on the decline. This is evident in two areas; Christian

Spain and Eastern Europe, which were in different stages of development. A further discussion will follow later in this chapter.

In the area where the high financial structure of the state was declining the Jews were reduced to serfs. This is quite evident again in Germany as in England. Jews had little money and when they had served their usefulness they were expelled. They did not have to go far because Germany was made up of many small principalities. It was not uncommon that Jews were used like cattle to pay off a debt. In the time of Rudolph of Hapsburg, Jews paid taxes on their bodies. When Jews had no money left they were expelled under the old ideology of diverting the masses.

In France the treatment was much the same; Jews were expelled three times in the fourteenth century. Some, or most of these expelled French Jews, went to areas under Christian rule where they were needed; such as Spain, Italy, and Poland. Here, the same Innocent III, who persecuted them in Northern Europe, welcomed them to these areas. The important thing to understand is that Jews were expelled not on religious grounds, but because of economic needs which fostered religious ideologies, which in turn led to Jewish persecution. But the Jews could not be completely wiped out by Innocent III, because they were so widely scattered and needed in other areas.

At the precise time that Jews were kicked out of certain areas they were welcomed in other areas, all under Christian rule. These

areas were in different stages of development from Northern Europe. Each of the three countries mentioned above were excellent places for Jews to live; Italy because of the rise of capitalism; Spain because Northern Christians had conquered the land and a civilization more advanced than their own, and they could only trust the Jews who were there; and Poland because it was a backward area and needed Jews to develop its economy. Poland was just entering into the feudal period when Northern Europe's feudal system was on the decline. At the end of the fourteenth century Jews were welcomed into Poland for the reason mentioned above; financial -- to manage the estates of the nobility, to aid in the urban development, to lend money on a large scale, and to serve as tax collectors.

In Italy the Jews were called in for the low-rate lending of money to the serfs, because then there would not be any competition for Christians who only dealt in high finance. But the aforementioned system collapsed -- Jews once again became the scapegoats. Jews served a double purpose in Italy: (1) when times were good -- to loan money at a low rate of interest to artisans; and (2) when times were bad to serve as scapegoats for diversion. By the end of the sixteenth century the position of the Jew had declined in Italy.

In Spain Jews were also welcomed because the Christians had conquered a more highly developed system of civilization. Feudalism was not used in Spain; therefore Christians did not know how to run Spain. Jews were welcomed because these new lords, who were used

to feudalism, needed someone they could trust to run the country. This was the work of Innocent III.

The wealthy Jews became tax collectors and king's administrators. They were exempt from taxes even though they were very rich and could afford the payments. Jews worked to the interest of the crown. They could be done away with very easily. If things went wrong it could be blamed on the Jews. This was possible because the populace had all their dealings with the Jews and they could easily be mistaken for the ruling class. As a result of this it is easy to see how anti-Semitism could thrive. The masses would believe the most fantastic tales if there was the slightest chance of its validity.

When the Christians invaded Spain it was like a gold mine; enough to support a nobility and a privileged wealthy class. By the middle of the fourteenth century the same thing again began to occur as in the other countries. A civil war broke out, because the ^{economy} surplus was decreasing and unable to support all groups. Jews were involved on both sides. Sadly enough it made no difference which side won. It would still be bad for Jews as once again the economy was going downward.

Like everywhere else conditions prior to this war were good. Anti-Semitism was in existence but not prominent. As the times grew worse and the struggle went to the lower classes, Jews would serve another purpose; that of the age-old scapegoat.

By the fourteenth century the church called for the removal of

Jews from high positions. The clergy went to the masses pointing out the "evil" of the Jews. The King, who needed the Jews, protected them to a point because he had no one to replace them. He realized, however, that he could only protect them up to a certain point, after that, if he kept protecting them, he would be labeled an agent of the Jews. Out of fear the King had to produce laws reinforcing the action of the masses and the clergy.

As a result of a sermon in 1391 a riot broke out and Jews were completely caught off guard and slaughtered.

So much for the Medieval Period and anti-Semitism. This gives us an excellent picture of how anti-Semitism develops even today.

There have been attacks on Jews because of their initiative, of their desire to get ahead and make a name for themselves. Very few American Jews have been unable to avoid at least some incident of anti-Semitism -- whether it be name calling, or being restricted from certain places. Anti-Semitic insinuations may even be felt when names like the Rosenbergs or the Sobels hit the front pages. This is what makes the Jews today, as it has throughout history, to have a strong sense of kinship. Sometimes anti-Semitic feelings arise out of unimportant situations. "What I don't like about Jews," an old gentleman at a bar in a large city said, "is that they don't get drunk like other people." Sure this is silly -- but it is a form of anti-Semitism. This, linked to the anti-Semitism of bigots like John Casper and Gerald L. K. Smith, who not only struck at Jews, but Negroes and Catholics as well, is what we

might call the anti-Semitic movement today.

Anti-Semitism like all aspects of life undergoes a process of change. It is always present -- but yet it exists in a latent form ready to be utilized by hate mongers to stir up prejudices. For the most part today, it no longer exists as it did in the past -- its process of change has been for the best -- but one incident, one event, can bring it to the forefront again.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER III

1. The Oxford Universal Dictionary, Third Edition Revised with addenda, Oxford, 1955, p. 871.
2. Whitman's, Howard., "How Old is a Bigot?" reprinted from The Woman's Home Companion by the A. D. L. of B'nai B'rith.
3. The Investigator, Jack Sobel, is now an instructor in Sociology at Miami University, Oxford, Ohio.
4. Schneiderman, Harry., "Anti-Semitism" The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia Vol. I, p. 341.
5. Ibid.,
6. In dealing with the Medieval Period, the process of Anti-Semitism and the conclusions drawn are based upon the theory of Professor Elis Rivkin presented in lecture form in 1959 at the Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati. All statements of fact can be found in these lectures.

CHAPTER IV

THE PROPHETIC MOVEMENT AS A PROCESS OF CHANGE

"Israel gave to the world, through the mouth of its inspired prophets, the principle of world-justice, world-peace, world-brotherhood."

Juliam Morgenstern

The main characters of this period were, of course, the prophets. The prophet was a man who out of his own experience knew God. He spoke the word of God to the people of Israel, of Judah, and of the Exile. He constantly denounced social injustice, irreverant worship, immoral acts, and violence, and he was forever imploring the people of Israel to cleanse and renew their lives.

The prophetic period lasted about seven hundred fifty years, during which time Canaan was conquered and the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah arose and fell. It also included the period of exile and the restoration of the people to the land. Throughout the entire period the impact of prophecy and the prophetic movement was dominant. There has not been anything comparable produced by any other Ancient Near Eastern civilizations, (not even among the Hebraic tradition).¹ The rise of the prophetic movement is difficult to explain. Originally it was the priest who performed the function of foretelling the future and telling the people when they had sinned before God.

It is not too difficult for us to understand why the prophet took over the function of the priest. The primary reason being

that the priesthood was hereditary. This meant that the office of priest, the handling of the rituals and ceremonies, was handed down from father to son. The art of foretelling the future could not be based on hereditary factors. As the place of foretelling declined² among the priesthood, it grew in another group, the prophets. It was easy for the prophets to take up where the priests left off because there was a dire need for this type of direct communication with God. Man needed a parlance to the deity. Let us look at one aspect of prophecy, for it would be impossible to examine prophecy in its entirety. This one aspect is universalism and how it differed among the various prophets. Prior to the prophet Amos (eighth century B.C.E.) there are in the Biblical books of Judges, Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles, numerous references to various prophets. However, it is with Amos, that we begin the Literary Prophetic Movement in Judaism. (Literary referring to the prophets whose prophecy is in book form.) These prophets and their followers thought of God as a powerful individual, who must be pleased through sacrifices and cultic worship.³ As the movement progressed, it changed and this change we will see as we discuss various prophets.

Amos, when he prophesied to the people of Beth-El in Israel, (north of Judah) did not change the idea of God as a powerful being, but ~~rather~~ added to this power righteousness. God, said Amos, was the source of moral value and He was not bound by national limits as the earlier prophets claimed.⁴ Amos' God is the God of all nations. Israel has no more claim to being a favorite of God than

⁵
any other nation.

The people laughed at Amos, they did not believe that God would destroy them, after all they practiced the correct cult and were a privileged people. ⁶ The people were looking forward to a day of joy, Yom Yahweh (Day of God). Amos changed this popular belief and told the people it would be a day of catastrophe. ⁷ The people would be destroyed by means of an earthquake, ⁸ a famine, ⁹ and a plague. ¹⁰ Finally they would be conquered by a powerful nation ¹¹ and carried into exile. ¹²

It seems that Amos did not want these incidents to occur so he appealed to the people to change their ways, to seek good and not evil. ¹³ Perhaps God will show mercy.

The question now arises, what was the extent of Amos' universalism? Was God the God of all people or just Israel? Amos was not free of prejudices in favoring Israel. God told Amos, "Go and prophesy to My People." ¹⁴ Amos knew of the traditional bond between Israel and God as pointed out in the Exodus, the sojourns, and the covenant. The land of Israel is spoken of as a clean land and foreign lands as being unclean. ¹⁵ The people thought this bond to be permanent, but Amos tells them differently; they have to earn this relationship to God.

Amos does not argue against other gods, he merely ignores them. ¹⁶ The God of Israel is responsible for all. When Amos speaks of the destruction of other nations, it is Israel's God who is doing the destroying, not other gods. ¹⁷ Likewise God will bring another nation

to destroy His people. Amos tells the people they have no special bond, God can join Himself to people anywhere. Thus, we see Amos had a very strong leaning toward universalism. The prophets that followed him went still further as shall be discussed.

The First Isaiah picked up the Universalism of Amos and carried it further. Isaiah carried on in the same tone as did Amos. He spoke of social injustice and of oppressing the poor. He too,
18 spoke of "Yom Yahweh" as a day of utter doom. In many ways he echoed the words of Amos.

Isaiah did go one step further in his universalism. Unlike Amos he spoke of Yahweh as The God and denounced foreign gods as false and the work of man's hands. His message includes the awareness that it is God, Himself, who is going to destroy His people,
19 not foreign gods destroying Yahweh. For Isaiah Yahweh was not
20 bound to the land. He was not a "parish" God. His power extended beyond Palestine to all lands and to all peoples. This was the most important message by the prophet. The idea that God's power extended beyond the natural boundary would be a ray of hope for the impending exile. To be sure, Isaiah said much more. But for our purpose in seeing change -- his universalistic belief of God is our main concern.

Now, with Jeremiah we get a drastic change in the concept of a universalistic God. In the earlier period of his prophetic mission
21 Jeremiah was a man, who spoke of utter destruction for the Jews. His message has the same tone as that of the prophets who preceded

him; God was the one who would do the destroying; ²² and He was the one who would cause His people to go into exile at the hands of the foe from the north. ²³ Jeremiah did everything in his power to convince the people to turn from their evil ways. ²⁴ The people did ²⁵ not, and of course the destruction Jeremiah spoke of came about in the year 587 B.C.E. The Babylonian armies, destroyed Jerusalem ²⁶ and carried the people into exile.

However, a strange thing happened to Jeremiah; he changed his message. He had preached destruction and it came about. Now he preached hope and comfort. He began to tell his people not to give up believing in God because God did not inflict this destruction ²⁷ upon the people without reason. Sure, they were going into exile into a strange land, but they should not give up hope. The people could still worship God outside the land; there still was the opportunity to cleanse the soul. God wants to forgive, He wants ²⁸ to restore the people to Palestine. But this will take time, about seventy years Jeremiah said. He gave them instructions as ²⁹ to how they were to live while in a strange land. Jeremiah's message now took on a more universalistic outlook. Religion for the Hebrews did not come to an end because they were no longer in the land of Palestine. He shifts the belief from a God of the land to a God of all lands able to be worshipped anywhere.

With this complete turnabout on the part of Jeremiah from rebuke to consolation, he paved the way for the prophets of the exile, namely Ezekiel and the Second Isaiah. It was the job of

these two individuals to guide the people and to prepare them so that they would be able to return to Palestine. Their task was not easy; they had to convince the people that Yahweh, their God, was not a defeated God, but a God of all people and of all lands.

With Ezekiel, we get for the first time a prophet speaking out of the experience of the exile. Here the message of Jeremiah (after 586 B.C.E.) received its greatest support. Ezekiel prophesied that all the destruction was brought about by God in order that all people will know Him. He furthers the prophetic universalism by adding to God's unlimited power; the concept that all people are God's people. Legend has it that the Synagogue came into existence at the time of Ezekiel. ³⁰ This can be viewed as a stepping stone to God's unlimited power; the idea that the Synagogue could be built anywhere. There was no need to have just a single sanctuary in Jerusalem. Like God the synagogue was not land-bound.

The Second Isaiah followed in the footsteps of Ezekiel. He re-echoed with emphasis the claims of the earlier prophets concerning God. God is Yahweh, there are no other gods. Only Yahweh has proven through historical events that He is the Universal God. The "process of change" in the Second Isaiah is that Israel is now given a mission, the mission of spreading the belief in the one God, ^{the belief in} ethical monotheism.

We have seen in a brief survey the "process of change" from Amos to the Second Isaiah. Each in his own way was a response to

his time. They wanted to bring about a complete change; a change that would lead to the belief of God, the one supreme powerful Being. They were successful sometimes, but for the most part their success was not felt until long after the prophets had ceased their activity.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER IV

1. Orlinsky, Harry., Ancient Israel, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1954, p. 4.
2. Meek, Theophile J., Hebrew Origins, Harpers, New York, 1950, Chapter V, "The Origin of Hebrew Prophecy."
3. Bamberger, Bernard J., The Story of Judaism, U. A. H. C., New York, 1957, p. 16.
4. Ibid., p. 17.
5. Amos., 9:7 ff.
6. Amos., 3:2; 9:7.
7. Amos., 5:18-20; 6:3, 13.
8. Amos., 2:13; 3: 14f.; 9:1.
9. Amos., 8:13 f.
10. Amos., 5:7; 8:3.
11. Amos., 2:14f.; 3:11; 5:3; 6:14; 7:9.
12. Amos., 4:3; 5:27; 6:7; 7:11, 17; 9:4.
13. Amos., 4:6-12; 5:4f., 14f.
14. Amos., 7:15.
15. Amos., 7:17.
16. Even though Amos does not speak out against other gods, 5:26 and 8:14 are obscure references to other gods in whom the people have trusted.
17. Amos., 8:9-13.
18. Isaiah., 3:6; 5:5f.; 6:11f.; 7:20f., 24; 8:7f.; 10:5f., 28, 34; 22:4f., 14; 29:2f.; 30:13f., 17; 31:4, 9.
19. Isaiah., 19:24.
20. Isaiah., 28:20.

21. Jeremiah., 7:11-14; 9:11-21; 19:2; 37:1-10.
22. Jeremiah., 26.
23. Jeremiah., 1:13-16; 4:5-31; 5:15-17; 6:1-8; 22-26; 8:14-16.
24. Jeremiah., 2:30; 5:3; 6:8; 15:7; 30:14; 31:18.
25. Jeremiah., 22:21; 6:13f.; 4:10; 23:17; 14:13; 5:31.
26. Jeremiah., 22:24-30; 27:20; 29:2; 52:28.
27. Jeremiah., 31:1-4.
28. Jeremiah., 30:12-22; 31:23-30; 31:31-34; 33:1-9, 23-26.
29. Jeremiah., 29:1-23.
30. Bamberger., op. cit., p. 36.

CHAPTER V

JUDAISM'S ATTITUDE TOWARD PROSELYTES - A UNIQUE CONCEPT IN JUDAISM

"To all who desire to come and live under the same law with us, our law-giver gives a gracious welcome."

Josephus

Attitudes Toward Seeking Converts

Judaism is a very distinct religion, and differs from other religions in many ways. Its history is unique; nowhere in the annals of the history of the world do we find such a collection as noteworthy as that of Judaism. Judaism gave the world the Five Books of Moses; a book of history which is truly an outstanding account of the early events of man. The language of the people also has a distinguishing characteristic, in that it is one of the oldest languages that has survived time. Judaism is also unique in the customs it observes, as part of its religious ideology. In all of these, Judaism differs greatly from any of its Protestant or Catholic counterparts. Uppermost in its distinction from the others is the fact that Judaism introduced the concept of monotheism, the idea of one God, to mankind. It is the mother religion from which ^{several} other religions of the world were born.

We are all in agreement with the validity of the aforementioned statements, but as we observe the history of the people we notice a vast and prominent distinction in Judaism as compared to the other religions. In every phase of its long history Judaism has never had

a planned program for seeking converts to its beliefs; there has¹ never been a missionary program.

This does not mean that converts to Judaism were unwelcomed; to the contrary they were gratefully received. There are many stories in the Talmud and the Midrash which illustrate this. There has been the legendary law, that a rabbi, before accepting an applicant for conversion, should refuse him and send him away three times. This was to impress upon him the idea that converting to Judaism was not a matter to be taken lightly. It is a very serious undertaking, because to live the life of a Jew is not easy. Why? Because there were many restrictions and prohibitions imposed upon² the Jew, both by his religion and by his secular environment.

There are two very interesting stories in the Talmud about Hillel and Shammai. "Our rabbis taught: A certain heathen once came before Shammai and asked him, 'How many Torahs have you?' 'Two,' Shammai replied; 'The Written Law and the Oral Law.' 'I believe you with respect to the Written Law, but not with respect to the Oral Law. Make me a proselyte on condition that you teach me the Written Law only.' Shammai scolded him and sent him away in anger. When this same man went before Hillel, he accepted him on his condition as a proselyte. On the first day of his instruction, Hillel taught him, alef, beth, gimmel, daleth. The following day he taught them in the reversed order. 'But yesterday you did not teach them to me thus,' the heathen protested. 'Must you then not rely upon me with respect to the Oral Law too,' answered Hillel."

There is the famous story also about the heathen, who approached Shammai to have him convert him on the condition that he teach him the Torah, while standing on one foot. Shammai refused, Hillel³ did not.

Both of these incidents point out the fact that as far back as the Talmudic period, converts were accepted even though there was no systemized missionary program.

Converts to Judaism are considered as native born Jews. A convert is like a new born infant. Once an individual embraces the Jewish religion, he no longer bears any of his other characteristics before another Jew, or before God. The rabbis taught that God does not show him favoritism nor chastises him for previous⁴ sins. If this is the case, then Jews themselves should not make a distinction between Jews and converted Jews. A proselyte has the same rights and privileges as a native born Jew. He is like a born Jew with respect to all of the commandments. Even though Judaism welcomes converts, no one is permitted to force, bribe, or otherwise influence an individual to convert to Judaism. On the other hand, no one is permitted to completely dissuade a "would be"⁵ convert.

The story is told in the Midrash of a non-Jew who wished to marry a Jewess. The girl said, "I will not marry you until you convert to Judaism." This is a clear case of enticing, so the non-Jew answered that he would convert to Judaism. "I will compel myself and I will convert," he said. What ultimately happened was that he

returned to his old ways. What do we have here?⁶ Is it just a story? No, it is a story with deep implications. It points out that conversion cannot be achieved on the basis of a promise involving individual lives. This is especially true in Judaism. Converting to Judaism is an act performed by ones own understanding and willingness. It is not something that is completed "on the spur of the moment". One should convert only after he has probed the deeper meanings of the religion and understands what advantages such an act would have for him. A person who converts on conditions similar to the ones mentioned is compared in the Midrash to the lowest of the beast of burdens, the donkey.⁷ The rabbis did not have much use for false beliefs.

There is another example of proselytising that the rabbis concerned themselves with. He is the proselyte, who is compared to Abraham. He is the proselyte, who says, "I will investigate everywhere," but when he saw the goodness of Israel he said, "When I will convert and I will be as one of them, then I will enter God's presence."⁸ The rabbis had high regard for those who gave much thought to their actions.

Now let us turn to a discussion of Judaism and conversion through history.

History of the Problem of Conversion in Judaism

In the Bible the problem of converts to Judaism is discussed in the Book of Ruth. In the story, a non-Jewish women decided voluntarily to become a Jewess after her husband died. She elected

to live with her mother-in-law rather than return to her own people. So virtuous was this woman that the end of the book records information that gave her everlasting fame. The story concludes with a geneology and in this geneology Ruth is placed as the ancestor of Jesse the father of David, King of Israel. Ruth's mother-in-law, Naomi, did not urge her; the choice was her own.

In the period immediately following, ^{the Biblical Period} the Jews came into contact with numerous people. This period called the Hellenistic period covers the Second Commonwealth and the beginning of the Diaspora. During this period there was a strong center of Jews in Palestine; followed after 70 C.E. with a scattering of Jews ⁹ throughout the world.

In this Hellenistic period which preceded Jesus by a number of years, people were looking for some form of salvation. The main beliefs of this time centered around the Greek culture with their various dieties. Jews at this time undertook to teach their religion to others. Some historians have termed this as a missionary attempt on the part of the Jews, but history does not support their theory. This was merely an attempt to educate the pagan to the idea of one God. This was especially true in Alexandria, Egypt where Jews taught the concept of one God as a God of ethics and humanism. To further their cause they arranged to have the Bible translated from Hebrew to Greek. Since it was translated by seventy scribes it was called the Septuagint. This enabled them to clearly teach the Bible to the pagan worshippers.

Now, it just so happened, that when the Jews taught their beliefs, those who were dissatisfied with their pagan worship were attracted to Judaism. It may be for this reason that many call this a missionary attempt on the part of Jews, but at any rate we can safely say it was not part of a planned program. There were however sporadic conversions to Judaism as pointed out in the stories of Hillel and Shammai.

With the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 C.E. by the Romans, there is a further dispersion of Jews throughout the known world. Now there is a radical change on the part of the Jews toward converts. Jews no longer wanted to teach their beliefs to non-Jews. Now, since Judaism had been weakened so much by Roman subjugation, Jews wanted to strengthen themselves from within. This attitude of not accepting converts was not always voluntarily imposed by the Jews upon themselves. The Romans did not permit the Jews to teach their beliefs to others. If any one was caught in such an act they were put to death. ¹⁰ These were hard times for the Jews, but it was a period of great progress. Now they strengthened themselves from within. This was the beginning of the great Talmudic period; a period of study and writing; a period in which the oral law was to be put down in writing in order to preserve it for future generations.

The Middle Ages were also years of suppression for the Jews. By this time the Church was in power in Europe; there were strict laws stating Jews were not to accept converts. If they did, they

would be severely punished. However, there were exceptions to this. The most celebrated one was the mass conversion of a group of people in Russia, who were attracted to the Jewish belief. These were the half-civilized Khazars, who came in contact with Western Culture through merchants traveling in the area. ¹¹ The King of the Khazars was an extremely intelligent person; everytime a merchant visited his village he would discuss their religion with them. Over a period of time he talked to merchants of the Christian, Moslem, and Jewish religions, questioning the merchants as to the origin of their religions. Both the Christian and Moslem merchants told him that Judaism was the mother religion with its monotheistic concepts. After much investigation the King of the Khazars led his people in conversion to Judaism.

So much were the Khazars influenced by Judaism, that when other tribes conquered them and tried to impose a new religion on them they fled. They left their land and all their belongings and went to Poland. The Khazars are memorialized in a book the Kuzari by Judah ha-Levi, the great Jewish poet and philosopher. In the Kuzari Judah ha-Levi, uses the story of the conversion of the Khazars as a basis for a plot to develop his philosophy.

In modern times conversion occurs most often when there is an inter-marriage. Still, many convert to Judaism out of a personal conviction and desire. Reform rabbis, when converting a non-Jew will provide him with a plan of study, that will include books on Jewish history, philosophy, and customs. The rabbi will perform the

rite of conversion only when he is convinced that the individual is certain of his choice after studying Judaism.

The acceptance of converts to Judaism, like all other aspects of Judaism, has undergone a "process of change." They were always welcomed, but never forced or coerced.

FOOTNOTES ON CHAPTER V

1. True, there have been exceptions to this. For example, the forced conversion of the Idumaens by John Hyrcanus and the Ituraeans by Aristobolus. For a discussion of this see George Foot Moore's Judaism, Harvard University Press, Cambridge 1954, p. 336 f.
2. Moore, George Foot., Judaism, Harvard University Press, Cambridge 1954, p. 333.
3. Both incidents are recorded in the B. Talmud, Shabbath 31a.
4. Moore., op. cit., p. 334 f.
5. Glatzer, Nahum., Lectures on "Jewish Institutions and Customs" at Brandeis University, Waltham, Mass., 1955.
6. Tana d'Be' Eliyahu, Friedman edition Chapter 27, p. 146.
7. Ibid.,
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9. Glatzer., op. cit.,
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11. Grazel, Solomon., A History of the Jews, Jewish Publication Society, Philadelphia, 1950, p. 280 f.

CHAPTER VI

JEWISH COMMUNAL ORGANIZATIONS

"The laws of Moses as well as the laws of Rome contributed suggestions and impulses to the men and institutions, which were to prepare the modern world; and if we could have but eyes to see the subtle elements of thought which constitute the gross substance of our present habit, both as regards the action of the state, we should readily discover how very much besides religion we owe to the Jew."

Woodrow Wilson

Jewish Organizations Throughout History

Have you ever stopped to think about the great country in which we live? Have you ever wondered about its system of government and how it began? I'm sure that you have. Many of you have spent endless hours in the study of history and government, yet how can we explain in simple terms why we have such a great government? Did it have a simple beginning that came into existence overnight? No, it was a long process which changed constantly to meet the needs of our times. The constitution of the United States with its twenty-two amendments testifies to this fact.

The same has been true of Jewish Communal and Organizational growth. Let us take a thumb-nail glance at these Jewish communal organizations throughout history.

Like all civilizations and early groups Judaism began in
1
tribes. When Moses led the Jews out of Egypt, we know there were
2
at least twelve Hebrew tribes, and gradually as time went on these

tribes combined to join a monarchy under Saul, David, Solomon, and the rest of the Davidic line of Kings. This lasted until 586 B.C.E. when the Jews were exiled to Babylonia. The period of Saul and the Davidic Kingship that followed is known as the First Commonwealth; the period after the exile (536 B.C.E. - 70 C.E.) is known as the Second Commonwealth.

It was during the Second Commonwealth under the Hasmonean Kings³ (Maccabees) that communal organizations emerged. In this period the Jews had a limited independence, but at the same time they had outside dependents; at one time or another they were a vassal state to the Persians, the Greeks, and the Romans.⁴ Before 70 C.E., which marked the end of the Second Commonwealth with the destruction of the Second Temple, the Sanhedrin developed. This group was made up of seventy learned men or judges. They supervised the political and legal make-up of the land of Palestine.⁵

After 70 C.E. there was a breakdown in the Jewish homeland. Palestine became a dependent of the Romans, and Palestinian Jews were now Roman citizens. Under Roman rule, the Jews lived in communities and were allowed to organize as the times necessitated.⁶ Their social structure was based on the Synagogue which was now a very important aspect of their Jewish life.⁷ All the Jews in a single community were organized under one ruling body; they appointed tax collectors to take care of the taxes for the Emperor and for the support of their own community. The community organizations through its leaders served as the connecting link between

Rome and the Jews.

These numerous communities which were spread throughout the entire Roman world were each independent of the other. There was no intercommunal bond.⁹ This had favorable as well as unfavorable points. Favorable, because it allowed for each area to develop freely according to the ultimate needs of each. ~~Something~~^{that} overall unification would not have permitted this. Unfavorable, because it left the Jews in a weakened condition ~~since~~ there was no bond of attachment other than language and their common religion in the midst of a Christian world. Each community took care of all the political, economic, and religious needs of its members.¹⁰

In each community there were a number of institutions which served the members:

1) School: the education of the children was left entirely up to the community, and the teachers were supported from funds collected; therefore it was considered a great privilege to be able to attend school.

2) Synagogue: each community had at least one synagogue depending upon its size. In the synagogue was the Bet Ha-Midrash (house of study) for higher education. The head of the synagogue was not the rabbi, as is the present-day custom, but rather the Parnas (the president). The rabbi was a scholar, a teacher, and a judge of Jewish law, who earned his living by practicing a trade.¹¹

3) Charity: this was one of the first organizations to develop in the community.¹² Since these were hard times to earn a

living poverty flourished. It has been the policy of the Jewish community to aid the impoverished, in order to keep them from becoming a burden upon the government. Funds were collected regularly and those who were in position were expected to contribute. One interesting feature of these charitable organizations was that they were non-sectarian; anyone in need was offered help.

4) Ghetto: the area that the Jewish population occupied in each city was enclosed within a wall. It was the responsibility of the community to take care of the streets and to build a gate which was to be closed at a specified time every evening. This prohibited Jews from leaving the area after dark. The Ghetto situation placed the Jews in a precarious position. It limited their activity and ability to intermingle with other people. Yet, in a way, the Ghetto played a big part in the survival of the Jew --- it created a feeling of togetherness, and with the Synagogue to comfort him, he felt that there was still hope. The Ghetto permitted the Jew to live as a Jew in a non-Jewish environment.

The Community also maintained various institutions necessary for every day life. These included the cemetery, a ritual bath, a slaughtering house, a hall for weddings, and a bakery. All of these were extremely necessary for any self contained Jewish

13
Community.

Two Special Institutions of the Community

1) Law Court: each community had its own Law Court. 14 The main function of this court, unlike the courts of today, was to

rule on matters of religion and religious practices. The rabbi served as a member of the court, but was not a spiritual leader in the way that we think of a rabbi today. He was the lawyer for the court. He signed his name on all legal documents as "The Father of the Code of Law."

The Community Court was made up of not less than three judges who received no remuneration for their services. Acceptance of payment disqualified them. They, like all rabbis of the period, earned their living through a trade. ~~They~~ only served the Jewish Community and did not sit in judgment in cases of capital punishment. These cases were handled by the government courts. Usually the cases brought before it concerned family, minor criminal offenses, and matters of religious concern. Criminal offenses were few and far between, because there was strict morality instituted through the study of Torah and by community pressure. The only punishments the courts handed down were imprisonment in local jails or a certain number of lashes supervised by a physician. 15 The idea behind this punishment was to reestablish order. It was customary for the judges to shake hands with the person punished in order to show publicly there was no ~~hostility~~ shown to the prisoner.

2) The Synagogue: the origin of the Synagogue is clouded in obscurity. The service was made up of communal participators -- no longer lead by a priest. Legend states that the synagogue came into being during the Babylonian exile (about 586-536 B.C.E.). It introduced a new mode of worship through prayer and not animal

sacrifice; individual prayer was more meaningful for the average person than sacrifices; and prayer removed the mystical air of the priest acting as intermediary between God and the people.

The structure of the synagogue building always took on the characteristic of the period or the locale. For example, during the Roman period a synagogue would be described in the following way: it was modeled after the Basilica. This means that it contained two rows of columns separated by a big hall (the sanctuary).

The synagogue was always built so that its Ark faced east. The reading of the Torah was the only service that needed the skill of a rabbi; and other than this, the rabbi was secondary. The Torah was read every Sabbath following either the Babylonian cycle (complete Torah read in one year) or the Palestinian cycle (complete Torah read in three years).

In the synagogues of the Diaspora (which included all areas where Jews lived outside of Palestine), certain ornaments and items of ritual observances used in the Temple in Jerusalem were not used. This was done so that the Temple of Jerusalem would never be imitated or forgotten; but would be remembered as it was.

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Development of Local Societies in the Jewish Community

Since Jewish life after 70 C.E. was no longer centered in Palestine but in the Diaspora, the community life of Jews grew and progressed. New areas of organizations evolved in order to satisfy the needs of the people, and as a result many types of

societies were founded. The local Jewish societies played a very important role in the communities where Jews settled. As time went on these societies served as the connecting link between communities, and were part of a larger communal organization. As a result they were under local control, and had no power of taxation. They were dependent only on the contributions that were given voluntarily by its members, and maintained certain laws, that if violated, were punishable by severe fines or even communal expulsion. This had a very serious effect socially and economically. These societies, specializing in activities that were close to its members' hearts, created a communal spirit among the masses more effectively than the official communities could.

These numerous societies can be classified into four groups within the community itself: religious, educational, charitable, and occupational needs. In smaller communities two or more of these activities were handled by one society since a small community could not support multiple societies.

Religious associations were usually found in all communities and their membership was always exceptionally large. They maintained a synagogue, usually sufficient in size to accomodate all the members. The members of local societies came from many different countries and as a result the rituals were different. This led to the formation of many congregations, and very often different congregations used the same building for worship.

This breaking up of communal activity made great headway in

the Turkish communities after the mass migration of Sephardic Jews in 1492. Many independent organizations and congregations were formed. A few congregational leaders tried to prevent the formation of so many congregations by pledging amongst themselves to prevent further subdivision, but this proved futile.

This same situation existed to some extent in Central and Eastern Europe with even individuals maintaining places of worship. Attempts were made to make all this justifiable. Some congregations in Central Europe adopted a compromise, that one synagogue building be erected by the whole Jewish community. This synagogue was to have the full "sacred character", while the other places of worship would be regarded as semi-private dwellings. This was all good on paper but at the time of worship the synagogue remained empty while the semi-private dwellings were filled to capacity.

More specialized religious functions were taken over by the burial associations which arose in large communities. These organizations came into being independently in Spain in 1323 and in Germany in 1329. They were organized along fraternal lines. Later these societies turned philanthropic, offering services graciously to both rich and poor. They became known as "holy associations of loving kindness." Soon communities of all sizes had burial associations.

There were many other religious organizations such as the Mystic Associations of Cabalist and Sabbatians which were responsible for the development of a special mode of life and the cultivation

of mystic lore. They were secret societies and as a result little is known about their relation to other communal associations.

In medieval Spain we note the beginning of the most significant educational institution of the Jewish community, the Talmud-Torah. Prior to this, educational facilities were in the control of semi-private organizations. Some were organized for the poor who could not afford to send their children to private tutors; others maintained schools for adult education under the direction of the communal rabbi. Most of these associations had formal laws of their own which outlined purpose and policy.

As a result of the Crusades a large number of charitable associations developed all over Europe. This development was also attributed to the growth of underprivileged groups, and this growth came about as a result of the increasing economic differences among the classes and the rise in the standard of living.

Charitable associations were founded in Spain as far back as 1266. Later they became very common and were found in all communities where there were groups of Jews. These Jewish "houses of mercy," as they were called, offered such services as visiting and caring for the sick, and aiding in the burial services of the needy.

In the beginning of the seventeenth century Italy took the lead in charitable associations. Now they provided clothing, food, and shelter. Some went as far as to supply a minimum dowry and trousseau to needy brides. These associations were supported only on what they received in donations, and since there were so many of

these organizations strict laws had to be enforced as to how they were to make their collections so as to avoid competition.

The eighteenth century, a "century of beggary," showed a very extensive expansion of Jewish philanthropic societies. This was attributed to the growth of Humanitarianism, decline in the powers of the Church, suffering caused by war, and the transformation of living brought about by the Commercial and Industrial Revolutions.

The development of the great number of the occupational associations of Jewish craftsmen was due to the economic self interest among Jews. These organizations were established along the order of the medieval guilds. They were established in countries of mass Jewish settlement, such as England, France, and Poland. The history of Jewish guilds goes back as far as the Talmudic period when such associations regulated the economic way of life.

Under Leo VI (895 of the Byzantine Empire) the Jewish guild system continued to grow. The Jewish guilds now included money lenders, bankers and clothiers. At this time all guilds admitted Jews.

Spread of Islam halted the growth of guilds in the Byzantine Empire. Beginning with the ninth century (C.E.) trade associations of all kinds spread throughout the Moslem world, with the "infidels" Christians and Jews allowed only to belong to the guilds of banking. This was in accordance with the Moslem canonical prohibition of usury (money lending).

More is known about Jewish professional associations in Spain

and Italy during the medieval period. As the result of such a large Jewish population in these two countries they had to utilize all opportunities that were left open to them by the government. Such associations go back as far as the fourteenth century in Spain when Pedro IV confirmed the status of the Jewish cobblers' guild, and as far back as the twelfth century in Italy.

The highest development of Jewish guilds occurred in Poland as a result of the rapid increase in Jewish population, and because Jews were excluded from Christian guilds on competitive and religious grounds. The latter reason was probably the more responsible for the rapid growth. The eighteenth century Jewish guilds included tailors, goldsmiths, lace makers, plumbers, tanners, barbers, weavers and furriers.

European Jewish society departed far from the ways of the accepted Talmudic pattern. This was stimulated by the surrounding living and environmental conditions. The foundations of these various associations were of great significance and were an invaluable supplement to the activities of the community. They provided an outlet for the accumulated energy that otherwise would have been wasted. Also, they were a valuable asset in causing the improvement of the conditions of the Jewish People.

The Forms of Jewish Communal Organizations in the United States

The early American Jews, who were responsible for the development of organizations in this country, had tremendous foresight.

They instituted an organizational set-up that was to serve the needs of what was to be the largest Jewish community in the mid-twentieth century. They did not plan only for their own times but for the future. America was a land that welcomed new settlers; and Jews, because they were being persecuted in every country throughout Europe, took advantage of this welcome.

The Jewish community in the United States split into three groups: Orthodox, Conservative and Reform.

The Orthodox segment of Judaism is comprised of those Jews, who follow the traditional approach. They follow the strict laws of traditional Judaism as laid down in the Bible. There are many independent Orthodox organizations made up of rabbis and congregations. The largest is the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations, established in 1902, which operates the Yeshiva College in New York City.¹⁸ There are about twenty five hundred Orthodox Congregations varying in size.

Conservative Judaism accepts the laws in the same manner as does Orthodoxy. They do, however, make slight modifications to fit the needs, the times, and the conditions. They are for the most part more interested in historic Judaism rather than the strict observances of the Orthodox tradition. A Conservative congregation can fall anywhere in between being strictly Orthodox, or Reform. Congregations will vary as to practice, customs, and rituals. The main organization of Conservative Judaism is the United Synagogue of America, established in 1913. This branch of Judaism operates

the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York City for the training
19
of its rabbis.

The third branch of American Jews is the Reform movement. This is a movement which fits the Jewish religion to the times. They, who are Reform Jews, are interested in preserving Judaism so that it has meaning for modern Jews living in a modern world. The Reform movement supports the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, The Central Conference of American Rabbis, and the Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion ^{a seminary} for the training of its rabbis. All three of these organizations of Reform were founded by Isaac Mayer Wise at the end of the nineteenth century.

From these three branches of Judaism there stems many organizations which all three support:

American Jewish Committee: This organization established in 1906 has as its purpose the job of safeguarding civil and religious rights of Jews at home and abroad. It is a non-zionist organization, that represents American Jews in the outside world in time of need.

American Jewish Congress: Organized in 1916 ^{it} functions in much the same way as the American Jewish Committee. The difference is that it tends to have strong zionistic leanings.

The United Jewish Appeal: A fund-raising organization which supports all major Jewish endeavors in this country and elsewhere. This organization boasts of the greatest representation of Jews, and it solicits funds once a year on a National level. There are additional organizations too numerous to mention.

One is able to learn from the aforementioned that Jews were also capable and able to care for their own needs and find solutions to their own problems. There never was unanimity in the Jewish ~~religion~~; there was always room to permit differences of opinion. Institutions were developed to meet the needs of the Jews.

What has happened to this organizational set-up over the years? They were created to serve the needs of the Jewish community. For the most part these organizations throughout history followed a "process of change." Institutions that were organized in the earlier period, were modified to fit the conditions. Some of them went out of existence or were replaced by new institutions. No matter where Jews lived, they always had some form of an organizational set-up to take care of the needs of the Jewish community.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER VI

1. Bamberger, Bernard J., The Story of Judaism, U. A. H. C., New York, 1957, p. 7 ff.
2. Genesis 49:28 ff.
3. Glatzer, Nahum., Lectures on "Jewish Institutions and Customs" 1954 at Brandeis University, Waltham, Mass.
4. Ibid.,
5. Ibid.,
6. Bamberger., op. cit., p. 186.
7. We have already discussed the origin of the Synagogue in Chapter II. A further discussion will follow in Chapter VII.
8. Bamberger., op. cit., p. 187.
9. Glatzer., op. cit.,
10. Bamberger., op. cit., p. 186.
11. Ibid., p. 187.
12. Moore, George Foot., Judaism, Harvard University Press, Cambridge 1954, Vol. II, pp. 174-179.
13. Bamberger., op. cit., p. 188.
14. Ibid., p. 186.
15. Glatzer., op. cit.,
16. Ibid.,
17. For a fuller discussion of the subject see Salo W. Baron, A Social and Religious History of the Jews, Vol. I, Columbia University Press, New York, 1937.
18. Lears, Rufus., The Jews in America, World Publishing Co., New York, 1954, p. 209 ff.
19. Ibid., p. 205 f.

CHAPTER VII

THE INSTITUTION OF PRAYER IN JUDAISM AS A PROCESS OF CHANGE

"The Book of traditional Jewish prayer is a treasure-trove of devotion. Though non-canonical in character, it bears the stamp of the same creative, religious genius which produced the Psalms and the prayers scattered through the historical and prophetic books of the Bible....as the Bible rendered the Jews a 'People of the Book', the Daily Prayer Book makes them a people of piety."

Dr. Samuel Cohon

In our second chapter we discussed what we meant by Judaism as a "process of change". We examined the "process of change" in our own lifetime, in our education, in a ceremony, and in the Reform Prayer Book. Now let us go back in history before the Reform prayer book or any other prayer book was published. How did prayer begin and how did it change throughout history?

Originally, as mentioned above, there were no such things as congregational prayers in the days of the Temple. Only animal sacrifice was utilized by the people through the Temple priest to appease God. It was only after the final destruction of the Temple that prayer took the place of sacrifice for all Jews. ^{But} let us not get ahead of ourselves; let us ~~begin with the early~~ Biblical ^{and trace prayer} period ¹ down to our own times.

We can safely assume that prayer, as a segment of religion, ² is one of its oldest institutions. No religion is without some form of prayer. Man prays when he is lonely and seeks the comfort of the nearness of God; he prays when he wants to give thanks to

God for good fortune; and he prays when he feels guilty of a sin of which only God can forgive. Throughout history prayer has raised man to a father-son relationship with God.

It might surprise you to know that the Bible (the entire Book, not just the Five Books of Moses) contains an extensive collection of the prayers of individuals, of priests, of prophets, and of kings. In fact, the entire Book of Psalms is one of the finest and most moving collections of prayers by individuals. In the Bible there is no mention of prayer having a fixed time (morning, noon, night) until the Book of Daniel in the period after the Exile.³ Prior to this, in the Bible, prayer was on an individual basis; whenever a person felt the need he prayed. Moses was such an individual, as was Hannah, the mother of Samuel, ~~and~~ with David and Solomon.

As mentioned earlier, the beginning of the institution of prayer can be traced to the time of the Babylonian Exile. Why? Because during this period many of the forms of public worship, which had existed before, were no longer possible due to the destruction of the Temple. Since public sacrifices were no longer available there arose a strong desire on the part of the individual Jew to be in closer contact with God. This was especially true after the prophet Jeremiah told the people that they could worship their God in other lands. Prayer became a daily ritual of life; three times a day the Jew offered his prayers to God; three times a day to correspond to the three daily sacrifices performed when the Temple

was standing.

This custom did not originate as a daily event until after the Exile. This assumption is based upon the Daniel reference, a post-exilic book. There the following action is recorded about Daniel, "And his windows being opened in his chambers towards Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before His God..." (Daniel 6:11).

During the rabbinic period the rabbi, in order to stress the importance of these three prayer periods, associated each time of prayer with one of the patriarchs. The morning prayer was originated by Abraham, the afternoon prayer by Isaac, and the evening prayer by Jacob.⁴

To understand the growth of prayer it is necessary for us to remember ^{certain} ~~the~~ events which took place in Jewish history, the Exile, the destruction of the two Temples, and the Diaspora. Without these events there would have been no need for individual and congregational prayer. The destructions and the Exile had left its marks on the remaining Jews; they felt that little remained, since God had forsaken them. Prophets like Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Second Isaiah, informed them otherwise. Ezekiel, for instance,⁵ would hold regular meetings with the Jews of the Exile. At these meetings, he would read the service that accompanied the sacrifices in the Temple at Jerusalem. Eventually the sessions became more and more regular. Gradually these meetings came to be held every Sabbath and festival, and these groups became worshippers with the

prophet as their leader.

As time went on, these assemblies were not forgotten. When the people returned to rebuild the Temple under Ezra (after 536 B.C.E.) they did not forget these assemblies. They became⁶ periods of study for interpretation of the Scriptures. These periods of study were followed by a worship service. The building where these meetings were held was called "places of assembly,"⁷ (Bet ha-Kenesseth in Hebrew and Synagogue in Greek).

The synagogue had such an impact that its influence was felt wherever there was a community of Jews. By the time of the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 C.E., synagogues were located⁸ throughout the known world. The synagogue is responsible for the development of the word of mouth as a replacement for animal sacrifices.

Another important innovation of the synagogue was that anyone,⁹ learned and respected by others, could lead the service. No longer did a priest have the importance he once held in the days of the Temple.

The "Men of the Great Assembly" carried on the work of Ezra¹⁰ after the return from the Babylonian Exile. They set down the outline upon which all prayer was to be constructed. These men realized that the service should primarily be congregational, not individualistic in framework. The prayers always were written in the plural; "We have sinned...", "We thank Thee..." or "We ask¹¹ Thee O Lord...".

For many centuries there never was a collection or a set order of prayers. Ironically this did not even occur in Palestine. After the destruction in 70 C.E. a large, prosperous, and well educated Jewish community developed in Babylonia. This community of Jews supported two academies of learning, Sura and Pumbeditha. The heads of these academies (The Gaon) were learned men and interpreted Jewish law for all the Diaspora. They attempted to solve all problems presented to them by Jews from all countries.¹² They would set down rules concerning ritual matters, interpretations of Biblical commandments, and customs. It was the Gaon Natronai in the ninth century who made the first attempt to compose an organized prayer book.¹³ Natronai had been asked by a Spanish congregation for some form of an organized service. We do not know too much about the order of the book since it was lost, but *we* only say we know of its existence ^{since} ~~as~~ that it is mentioned in later Rabbinic Literature and ^{that} some of its prayers are found in later prayer books.

The first complete order of service was written by another Gaon, Amranj, a disciple of Natronai.¹⁴ This prayer book is often referred to as the predecessor of all prayer books. It forms the basis upon which all subsequent books were written. The prayer book of Amran not only had a complete year-round service, but also a running commentary on the prayers.¹⁵ The prayer book continued to expand in use and went through many revisions at the hands of Saadia Gaon, Rashi and Maimonides.

Each one of these prayer books represents a link in the history

of Jewish worship; and each prayer book was written and compiled to fit the needs of the time. As conditions of the Jews changed, the prayer book was revised and enlarged.

Hebrew prayer in no way shows evidence of magic. It serves as a technique by which the Jew may pray from his soul. For the most part the prayers were written in Hebrew. Gradually the prayers were translated into everyday language, and Reform Judaism has translated most of the Hebrew prayers into English. This has enabled the congregants to understand more fully what is incorporated in the prayers.

As time went on and Judaism became divided into three distinct groups, each composed its own order of service. Before the Central Conference of American Rabbis published the first Union Prayer Book, it was customary for noted rabbis to compose their own prayer book. Such prayer books were Wise's Minhag America, and Einhorn's Olat Tamid. The Union Prayer Book continues the tradition of the ancient service. Its purpose was to try and bring the individual person into the service. Other prayer books in use did not give the worshipper a sincere feeling for the prayers.

The Jewish prayer book has not been the work of one person, but it has developed with the Jewish people wherever they lived. The important thing about the prayer book is that it gave the Jews outside of Palestine in the Diaspora, something by which they could hold on to their faith and beliefs no matter what befell them. The prayer book was not something artificial, but rather ^{Expressed} the hopes

of a people. It constantly underwent change. Some prayers were even eliminated when they no longer held any meaning. The prayer book has surely been ^{the product of} a "process of change".

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER VII

1. True, prayer did not come into its own until after the destruction of the Temple, nevertheless, we do have various references to individual prayers in the Bible. In Exodus 32:11-14 and Numbers 12:13; 14:14-20, we find prayers offered by Moses. In I Samuel 11:1-11, there is a prayer by Hannah. There are also prayers by David and Solomon in I Chronicles 19:10-20 and I Kings 8:23-53 respectively.
2. This is true by definition, since we find prayers in the Old Testament.
3. Daniel 6:11.
4. Genesis Rabbah 68:10.
5. Grazel, Solomon., A History of the Jews., J. P. S., Philadelphia, 1950, p. 19.
6. Nehemiah 8:1-18.
7. Hertz, Rabbi Joseph H., The Authorized Daily Prayer Book, Bloch Publishing Co. New York, 1954, p. XVI.
8. Ibid.,
9. Bamberger, Bernard., The Story of Judaism, U. A. H. C., New York, 1957 p. 80 f.
10. Mihaly, Eugene., Lectures on "Jewish Liturgy" at the H. U. C. - J. I. R., Cincinnati, 1956.
11. Ibid.,
12. Margolis, Max L. and Marx., A History of the Jewish People, J. P. S., Philadelphia, 1956, pp. 233-276.
13. Ibid., p. 256.
14. Hertz., op. cit., p. XXII.
15. Ginzberg, Louis., "Amram ben Sheshna," Universal Jewish Encyclopedia Vol. I, p. 535 f.
16. Eisenstein, Judah., "Prayer Books" Jewish Encyclopedia Vol. X, p. 171.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

"A nation....which has witnessed the rise and decay of the most ancient empires, and which still continues to hold its place in the present day, deserves....the closest attention."

Heinrich Graetz

The objective of teaching history should be understanding. It should be more than an accumulation of data in a chronological order. The effectiveness of such a technique in the one-day-a-week Reform religious school has proven to be of little effect. The primary concern has been to teach the child through "parrot-fashion", that a particular event occurred. There has not been, for the most part, any attempt to instruct the child in such a way as to provide him with a tool for understanding history. It has only been recently that a new approach was introduced; a child centered approach to teaching in the Reform religious school. The Department of Jewish Religious Education at the Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, under the direction of Rabbi Sylvan D. Schwartzman, has in the past few years developed several texts to be the basis of a new child *interest* curriculum; a curriculum that will instruct the child in such a manner that his religious education will be of greater value to him, because it is interesting and fits into his daily life.

Such is the case with the teaching of Jewish history if we are to expect our children to retain what they are taught in

religious school. Our Jewish history curriculum must create in the child a desire to know the answer to several basic questions:

- 1) How ~~is it~~ I am what I am? 2) Why study history, especially Jewish history? 3) What are we today as a result of four thousand years of uninterrupted history? 4) How do we relate to the past? 5) What does the future hold for the continuation of Judaism?

All of these are questions which will undoubtedly be raised in the mind of the child, if he is provided with the correct tools, more specifically the correct texts. It is the purpose of this thesis to work in that direction by providing the basis for a text, which will lead the child through Jewish history via the topical approach.

In developing this text, the author used as his basis the idea that Judaism throughout its history has undergone a continual "process of change". This "process of change" in Judaism is similar to the changes that occur in ones own lifetime, such as in the city where one lives, as well as in the educational system. Judaism, likewise, has undergone changes. It was pointed out that the festival of Pesach, as we observe it today, is the combination of two separate festivals. The prayer book, also has undergone a change, and the Union Prayer Book ~~being~~ the result of this continual process. Basically, this thesis has as its main purpose to show that Judaism, as we know it today, has undergone a continual "process of change" to fit the needs and the times of the people.

For the most part this idea has been carried through the thesis. For instance, in the chapter on anti-Semitism, it was shown that

by tracing the history of Jews in a given period, specifically the Medieval Period, certain phenomenon could be labeled as causing anti-Semitic eruptions. Invariably anti-Semitic outbreaks always came about as a result of the economic situation. When the economy was good, things went well with the Jews; when the economy was in a low state, then anti-Semitism broke out. Anti-Semitism, then underwent a "process of change" to fit the needs. It was always present, but in a latent form, ready to be called out as a means to divert the anger of the masses from the declining surplus, by blaming all the economic trouble on the Jews.

In the chapter dealing with the Prophetic Movement, the God concept of the prophets was discussed briefly in its development from a God of a single group of people to a national God, to a universalistic concept, with all people being God's people, no matter who they are or where they lived. The concept of God originated with Amos as a "parish" God to be worshipped only in Palestine and concludes with Ezekiel as a God of all people able to be worshipped in all lands.

One of the greatest phenomena of Jewish history is that ~~the Jews are~~ still in existence after having undergone constant persecution and subjugation. The communal organizational system of Jews throughout history is partly responsible for this survival. As times warranted, various organizations and societies arose within the Jewish community to fit the needs of the people as they went through "processes of change". Charitable, and burial

societies, schools, synagogues, bakeries, bath houses, and slaughter-houses were each developed because the Jews were forced to live in their own restricted communities. As conditions for the Jews changed, some of these organizations closed their doors or were incorporated into another larger agency or replaced by a new system. Jews have always managed to cope with their needs that were a result of the "process of change" in their living situations.

When the Jews were forced to live their lives without intermingling with the rest of the population it strengthened them. During these hard times Jews were prohibited from teaching their beliefs to non-Jews. A closer look at Judaism and the seeking of converts will point out that the Jews never had a planned missionary program. True, there have been examples of forced conversion to Judaism, but these were so few that ~~they do not lend credence~~ to what some scholars say who believe that Judaism had a program for the seeking of converts. As times changed and Judaism underwent a "process of change," the idea of seeking converts was altered. Jews welcomed converts to their religion, but never have they forced, bribed or coerced them.

Chapter Seven, which is the final chapter of the text, traces the development of the word of mouth as a means of entreating God from the sacrifices of the Temple, to the tefilah - bimkom - karbon of the exile, ^{and eventually} to the Union Prayer Book of today. Prayer is one of the oldest of religious institutions. ~~It~~ came into being because Judaism underwent a "process of change"; a "process of change"

which no longer permitted ~~them~~^{people} to offer sacrifices in the Temple at Jerusalem, for which prayer became a substitute.

This thesis has been developed with the intention that it will create in the child of the Reform religious school the desire to familiarize himself with the history of his people, so that he will be better equipped to understand the "process of change" that has transpired, and therefore be able to deal more effectively with the problems that will confront him as a modern American Jew.

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