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"SYMBOLS, SALVATION AND LIBERAL JUDAISM: AN EVALUATION OF THE BELIEF-AND CEREMONIAL-STRUCTURE OF CONTEMPORARY JUDAISM"

by

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Thesis submitted in partial
fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts
in Hebrew Letters and Ordination

HEBREW UNION COLLEGE-JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION

June, 1970 Referee, Professor Alvin J. Reines

DEDICATION

To

My wife, Judy, for her constant support

and to

Dr. Alvin J. Reines and the Society for the Creative Advance of a Free Judaism.

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DIGEST

This thesis attempts to distinguish between that within modern Judaism which is of essential importance, "substantives," and that which is of subsidiary, secondary importance, "symbols." Symbols may be said to serve substantives.

The first chapter examines the variety of views held at the mid-nineteenth century Reform rabbinical conferences in Germany. This diversity of opinions was to prove characteristic of Reform Judaism, and of liberal Judaism in general.

The second chapter argues that: there being no sufficient grounds to the contrary, the individual Jew has the right of free religious choice in thought and action. This right of individual decision is a substantive issue of Reform Judaism.

The third chapter finds that essentially religion is and has been concerned with the individual's salvation -- though this concern has not always been conscious. In the past, reality having been viewed in a certain light, Jews were helped to attain salvation in certain ways. Today, reality being understood differently, the means, the symbols for attaining salvation, require changes. An approach for this new symbolism is outlined.

The fourth chapter presents some examples of how to change aspects of the existing symbolic structure so as to better reflect the contemporary Jew's perception of his world.

In the fifth chapter a critique is made of the thought of Mordecai M. Kaplan. Thereby it is hoped that the cause of a truly liberal Judaism may be advanced.

Chapter 1

AN ANALYSIS OF REFORM JEWISH THOUGHT IN MID-19th CENTURY GERMANY

A. Definitions :

"A religious element is any thing, act, or belief that is used, performed, or held in a religious system.

A religious substantive is any religious element that is valuable in itself, and is, therefore, unique and irreplaceable in that religious system.

A religious symbol (in chapters three and four this term will be dealt within greater detail) is any religious element that is primarily valuable not in itself, but for the reason that it is the means to some other valuable or essential element in that system. Thus the symbol, unlike the substantive, is not unique and can theoretically be interchanged with or replaced by other symbols which would serve the essence it symbolizes equally well."[1]

The above terms will now be applied to the published content of the rabbinical conference held in Brunswick (1844),[2] Frankfurt a/Main (1845),[3] and Breslau (1846).[4]

In the following listing of positions held, it is understood that individuals are well able to be inconsistent and thus may adhere simultaneously to more than one position, and that they are capable of holding seemingly opposing opinions with respect to different religious elements.

B. The Orthodox Jewish view as found at the conferences:

All of Judaism is infallibly and unquestionably divinely commanded. No ceremony, ritual or other element of Judaism can be replaced. Every religious element has been decreed by the Creator God and is therefore

uniquely valuable, and binding upon Jews.

What was the extent of Orthodox Jewish thinking present at the three conferences? Quantitatively very little. Some statements which seem to reflect at least sympathy with Orthodox Jewish thinking are: Schott's: "the Sabbath laws do not conflict with the fulfillment of the duties of men and citizens---since even rabbinism (permitted) certain necessary easing."[5]

Then, Reiss seems to show Orthodox tendencies when he claims that Maimonides prevents Jews from eliminating Hebrew, especially the Brachot.[6]

Again, Rabbi David Einhorn(!), Samuel Hirsch and others seriously considered the halakhic question submitted to the conference by one of the congregations: For purposes of fulfilling the commandment of the mikve, may women use the municipal bath where "drawn waters" rather than "living waters" are in use?[7]

C. The question of authority and religious freedom:

Clearly, as might have been expected, the talmudic, "Pharisaic," Orthodox Jewish view had few representatives in these gatherings of Reform rabbis. By and large, those who came had already clearly rejected the binding authority of the letter of Talmud or Bible---at least in most of their thinking. Abraham Geiger in defining the purpose of the Breslau conference stated the dominant view of the rabbis at the conferences:

> "The conditions are difficult, and confusion in religious affairs appears to be on the increase; despite this you are in this conference again making the courageous attempt to place the pure eternal content of Judaism in a form suited to the present and thus to breathe into it a new, potent spirit. You wish to convince, guide to the truth, not to forge bonds

> and fetters; you know full well that you do not appear here as guardians of consciences, that you do not have supreme power over the inalienable religious freedom of congregations and individuals; nay, you would solemnly return such power were it to be offered you, for true religion can prosper and grow only in the atmosphere of freedom of conviction."[8]

The stated aim of the first conference, at Brunswick, reads:

> "The rabbinical conferences have as their aim that the members consider together by what means the preservation and development of Judaism and the enlivening of the religious consciousness may be accomplished."[9]

Thus, by their own defined aim, these Reform rabbis did not see themselves as laying down the law for Jews. They were concerned with means, with symbols to preserve, develop and enliven that in Judaism which was felt to be substantive---not with divinely revealed law. S. Holdheim, the radical Reformer of mid-19th century Germany expressed this idea clearly on various occasions, for instance: "Science has decided that neither in practice nor in dogma has the Talmud any authority (over us) . . .Who gives us the right to make liturgical change? . . .The "Men of the Great Assembly" have authority only for their time...we have the same authority for our time, when we bring to conscious speech the consciousness of our age."[10] And, "We merely say: that which upon unprejudiced, thoughtful criticism contradicts the contemporary religious consciousness, has no authority (for us.)."[11]

A letter from the Cöslin congregation clearly expressed the dominant understanding of the role of the conference and thus was read into their proceedings: "All your resolutions, whether already adopted or yet to be adopted, should be considered not as unbreakable legislation, rather as opinions grounded in the spirit and pure principles of Judaism, (principles) which every individual congregation may modify according to its unique needs for religion and cultural consciousness."[12]

Thus, by their general rejection of authority and their statements such as: "inalienable religious freedom of congregations and individuals," "true religion can prosper and grow only in the atmosphere of freedom of conviction," "development of Judaism," "that which----contradicts the contemporary religious consciousness, has no authority (for us) "----through these and other statements the Reformers at the German conferences showed that they had left the Orthodox Jewish camp. Thereby they opened the door to the possibility of change.

Within the range of non-Orthodox Jewish options at the conference were the following four opinions:

A. All is substantive: The traditional customs and ceremonies are meaningful and valuable in and of themselves. Keep the traditions for reasons of commitment rather than commandment. Though revelation is no longer certain, the religious acts learnt from previous generations of Jews are unquestionably Jewish.

In practice this opinion appears to be no different from the Orthodox view. In conceptualization, however, this approach is considerably different: The content of the Jewish religion is no longer held to be divine in its totality. Rather the criterion is meaningfulness, value to the Jew. Thus, though this opinion holds all of traditional Judaism to be substantive, it is the opening wedge for more radical viewpoints.

B. Keep the traditional rituals, customs and ceremonies---past history affirms them as being "Jewish"---but reinterpret these "externals" according to contemporary thinking, i.e., the "traditions" are substantive, the belief-structure is not and can be replaced.

C. Eliminate religious elements as being neither substantive in themselves nor being effective means to a substantive.

D. View the inherited, traditional rituals, ceremonies and customs as symbols which point to and serve certain substantives but are themselves replaceable, should they no longer be effective.

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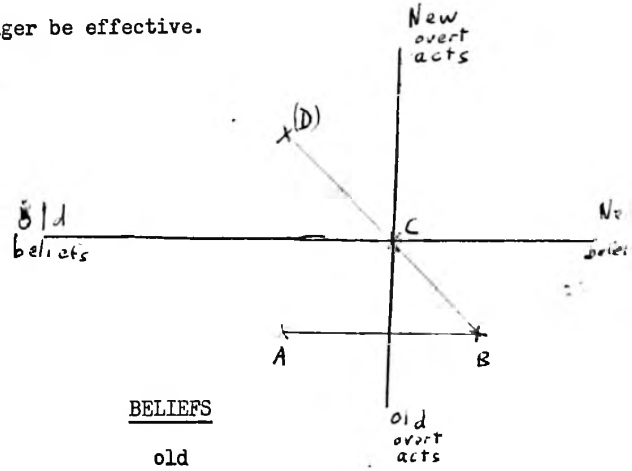

	ACTS	BELIEFS
A	old	old
B	old	new
C	0	0
(D	new	old)

As it is questionable whether all the rabbis who introduced innovation held to a traditional belief-structure, D deserves special treatment---it does not completely fit into this schema.

D. "Conservatism":

Dealing with the question of Musaph services and whether or not to retain them, one section of the commission on Liturgy under Ecclesiastical Counselor Maier felt "We bear in mind that we cannot well do without these prayers on the High Holy Days."[13]

The position which maintains that one should retain the religious elements inherited from the past because we know them through Jewish history to be positively Jewish, is all too easily identified with the "view" of Conservative Judaism. Yet Zacharias Frankel's general statement at the Frankfurt conference[14] did not dispute over whether there should be reform in Judaism, but what should be reformed: beliefs or legal acts. He also stated, "Religion, as an abstract must have an external bond which constantly reminds us of the Godhead. Many individual ordinances, as for instance, Tefillin, Mezuzah, etc., have this as their purpose. The use of the Hebrew language at prayer fulfills the same purpose, that is, to remind us constantly of the biblical words and simultaneously of our covenant with God. These different aids to memory are similar to the bundle of arrows in the well-known fable. As long as the arrows are tied together they are unbreakable, but as we pull out one after the other, the whole bundle will soon be broken. So much that is characteristic in Judaism has already been obliterated. The time has come to call a halt...it is urgently necessary that a part of the service be held in German. However, I believe that Hebrew must predominate, for it carries with it the sentimental elements of edification and stimulation which otherwise are missing in our service. This edification and stimulation is provided by Hebrew, because we are thereby reminded that it is the language of revelation in which God spoke to Moses. For us, Hebrew in the worship service is necessary..."[15]

Frankel here clearly shows his desire to maintain the Hebrew in the service because it "works." He does not base himself on any infallible revelation, rather this is the "external bond which constantly reminds us of the Godhead." He states it as his <u>personal belief</u> that Hebrew is a

valuable for religious sentiment. That Frankel's position regarding Hebrew had considerable support, was made clear when the conference voted on whether the retention of Hebrew in the service is objectively necessary for other than legal reasons. (The vote was 13 affirmative, 2 abstentions and 15 negative.)[16] Subsequent to this "opinion poll," Frankel resigned from the conference and eventually founded Conservative Judaism. It is worthy of note that: (a) Frankel stated his position as being his personal (subjective) approach, making no attempt to find a more "objective" basis. (b) The vote as to whether Hebrew was objectively necessary---- ---halakhic reasons having been rejected----was in effect a poll of opinions held by the participatns of the conference. (c) Frankel's dispute with the Reformers was with what many of them believed, not with the fact that an objective, certain basis for belief no longer existed. (Thus, by implication, Conservative Judaism ---though unaware of this fact--- is a much without objective certainty in matters of belief as is Reform Judaism.) (d) Frankel tried to put his beliefs on a firmer basis. He stated that he could only support the rabbinical conferences if in considering reform, the rabbis would bear in mind the "entire body of positive Judaism."[17] Thus Frankel postulated a gestalt, which if agreed upon would make the proceedings of the conference more objective. The rabbis endorsed his statement, but the trouble arose when they had to evaluate what was <u>essentially</u> part of the "entire body of positive Judaism," and what was not. In defending Hebrew, Frankel said, "So much that is characteristic of Judaism has already been obliterated." To Frankel Hebrew was essential and characteristic to the "entire body of positive Judaism." Some of the Reformers agreed with him, some disagreed with him. The basis of their positions was a subjective choice.

E. Reinterpretation:

This outlook was evident in the desire to interpret traditional parts of the liturgy as reminiscences rather than in their literal sense. An example is A. Adler's[18] statement: "I demand the retention of these liturgical passages referring to the sacrificial cult....as a reminiscence."[19]

Also the debate over what is the essence of the Sabbath--rest or consecration--fits into this interpretation approach, in that a large concern was not so much how to observe the Sabbath, as for what purpose is the Sabbath day to be observed.[20]

Again, note L. Phillipson's: "Now Hebrew is indeed a means of stimulation, for through it, Shema Yisrael, the unity of God, was first pronounced... Hebrew also is a means of teaching through reading from the Torah. This must not be eliminated because otherwise the Bible would be completely removed from the eyes of the people. The sermon further complements the teaching.

The Hebrew language is indispensable as a central point of our religion. The German Jews are German, they think and feel German and want to live and work as patriots. But Judaism is not German; it is universal. The dispersion of the Jews is not the dispersion of Judaism. And, therefore, it must have a unified character. Its content is its creed; its form is represented by the Hebrew language.

In civil matters we strive for unity with all our compatriots. However, in religious matters we may and must hold fast to the distinguishing elements. The minority needs these elements vis-a-vis the overwhelming majority. Hebrew in our service is such a distinguishing element.

The Hebrew language is neither poor nor dead, as has been maintained. Masterpieces have been written in it which will never perish; and, as a language of religion, it has everything and indeed is still full of life. Hebrew therefore, must be integrated organically with German elements."[21]

F. Elimination:

But if all the above varieties of thinking with respect to the relevance of means and ends in Judaism were present, the most frequently occurring response is to cut back, to surrender customs, ceremonies, symbols as no longer being potent for contemporary Judaism. Like the responses of conservatism and reinterpretation of externals, the rationale behind this approach is the subjective emotions of those who react to the particular -- in this case negatively.

If the early Reformers had been only conservative and interpretive in their thinking, there would never have been a Reform Judaism as we know it. At the most extreme, there might have been a kind of Reconstructionism. For the sake of relevance and meaningfulness, the rabbis at Brunswick, Frankfurt-am-Main and Breslau negated (or encouraged negation of) much of the inherited and, as they felt, meaningless elements of Judaism.

Early on in the conferences, the rabbis unanimously rejected the oath More Judaico (noting that this is not a Jewish tradition but an anti-semitic imposition) and declared the Kol Nidre formula to be non-essential. They simultaneously declared their intention to attempt its abolition.[22] This negation was by no means only a Reform reaction. Since its comparatively late inception and inclusion in the Machzor, Orthodox rabbis had strenuously objected to this formula. On this common ground of rejecting Kol Nidre and the More Judaico the Brunswick conference "got off the ground."

On the question of the role of Hebrew, various Reformers were clearly willing to bring in change, in this case to eliminate the language as an unnecessary barrier to true religion, e.g., Abraham Adler:

> "We must search here only for the truth and must keep ourselves far from every sentimentality. It may (cause) pain to give up certain things, but it must be done when necessity demands.. The proofs for the necessity of the Hebrew language are all invalid. It is said: 1) The Hebrew language is sacred. Not at all! That language is sacred which proclaims the sacred. If I speak the truth in German, then that German word is sacred. If I lie in Hebrew, then that Hebrew word is unholy. Not the letter, not the sound makes the Bible sacred, but its content.
>
> It is said further:...2) People fear for the unity of Israel. But language does not create unity; it is that unity begets the language. Therefore, the continued use of Hebrew does not fill this purpose.
>
> 3) It is said that the worship service needs the mystical element. Yes, there is indeed truth in the truly mystical, which is the immediate impact on the soul and its deepest grasp of truth. But just because of this, the mystical is not the same as that which is ununderstandable, and lack of understanding reveals no truth.
>
> 4) If one really is afraid of a hierarchy, why then are the last remnants of the priestly caste still allowed to stand, i.e., the Birkat kohanim and the other prerogatives of an extinct priesthood? Why does one even pray for its restoration?
>
> On the other hand, there are many reasons for the elimination of the Hebrew language: 1) There is a cancer within our religion -- namely that the Hebrew language encourages hypocrisy and lip-service which fact was already attacked by Isaiah (29:13): 'With their mouth and with their lips they do honor Me, but have removed their hearts far from Me.' Hypocrisy and lip-service bring about the decline of religion and genuine religious knowledge.
>
> 2) The emphasis on the letter has caused many to be indifferent to the sense of the Bible. Hebrew is ununderstandable and unknown even to the many pious people who pray frequently in Hebrew. Hebrew prayer has harmed the knowledge of the Bible instead of encouraging it. If one ceases to sanctify the letter, then everyone can get to the content itself.
>
> 3) Whatever one may say about it, the Hebrew language is poor in words and expressions. Therefore, it is difficult and unclear. In any case, it is dead because it does not live within the people..." [23]

Some of the ideas in this statement by Adler reflect dominant trends in Reform Jewish thinking: content is important. Knowledge of what one is saying is essential for a sincere religion. In the days before the

renascence of the Hebrew language, Adler can still say: "It is dead because it does not live within the people." (Clearly here are overtones that if Hebrew were once again to live within the people -- then there would be no need to eliminate its use.)

Further clear examples of the tendency to negate would be: Herxheimer's suggestion to abolish the second days of festivals: "There is good reason to shorten the number of festival days in order to increase religious sentiment."[24] Also the motion at Breslau to cut back on a number of mourning practices.[25]

G. Conscious innovation or creation of symbols:

Note for instance, Maier's plea for a new prayerbook and liturgy.[26] Also the encouragement of the organ which "will serve many purposes as a means of elevating the worship service and exalting the soul on festive days."[27]

Similarly Holdheim's creative suggestion of moving the Sabbath day observance to a Sunday[28] can, it seems to me, best be seen as such an attempt to find new and more effective means, when the old are failing. It seems to me that all too often what has been in a true sense radical (Latin "radix" meaning "root") thinking has been unjustly portrayed by the less bold as being, to paraphrase Graetz[29] mere slavish imitation of the goyim.

Another example of the fresh thinking of the reformers was their insistence upon women as equals.[30] Yet another valuable action growing out of the conferences was the founding of the Breslau Rabbinical Seminar.[31] If the tendency to negate religious elements was the most frequently occurring theme at the conference, the tendency to look for new means to better

express what were seen as being old substantives was second in frequency.

From this study we can see emerging an outline of the early identity of German Reform Judaism as represented in the views of the rabbis at the conference.

1) On the one hand Reform was no Orthodoxy. There was no binding authority from the past.

2) On the other hand Reform Judaism---by not even raising the question ---considered itself Jewish, within "Judaism."

3) German Reform Judaism contained elements of the traditional Jewish structure, virtually unchanged.

4) German Reform did not hesitate to reinterpret the inherited "externals" in the light of their contemporary thought.

5) The German Reformers did not shy away from eliminating what they saw as trivial, irrelevant or objectionable.

6) Reform Jews created and adopted new forms of religious expression. Analyzing what they felt was the real objective or substantive at stake, the German Reformers strove to bring new symbols to serve these---as they saw them---essences.

"The principle of radical freedom----was at the heart of the movement, although still only an implicit principle rather than an explicit one. ---- These conferences did not result in the establishment of an organized body of leadership for the Reform movement, but they provided the opportunity for an exploration of the problems and possibilities of the Reform situation; the procedure of the conferences they initiated contributed materially to the methods which resulted in the final phase of the Reform movement to occur in America."[32]

Chapter 2

THE ONE SUBSTANTIVE OF REFORM JUDAISM IS FREEDOM

A. Preliminary remarks:

In Mishna Sanhedrin 10:1 there is this statement:

> "All of Israel have a portion in the world to come, but these have no portion in the world to come:
>
> He that says there is no resurrection of the dead laid in the Torah;
> And (he who says that) the Torah is not divine (lit. "from heaven");
> And an "apikoros" (heretic or sceptic)."[1]

On various occasions this dogmatic statement has been cited as a definition of the 'Pharisaic,' Orthodox Jew.[2] It should be noted that an individual who differs with any part of this statement has ceased to be an Orthodox Jew. Yet today few modern Jews hold to any idea of physical resurrection; The Bible is widely accepted as being a fallible human creation; The word 'apikoros' could be applied to most modern Jews, for a sceptical, questioning mind is highly prized in our scientific and technological society, while the search for happiness and pleasure (Epicurus is the origin of 'apikoros') permeates our life-style. Thus it is clear that the modern Jew differs substantially from his ancestors. Today the variety of Jewish outlooks is, if anything, greater than the diversity outlined in the first chapter of this thesis.

This chapter is, in effect, a Bill of Rights for Reform Jews. Remarks which apply to Reform Judaism frequently apply equally to other branches of liberal Judaism, but the immediate focus of my attention is the Reform Jewish situation. The content of this chapter is to be understood as an argument against authority religions, such as Orthodox Judaism (also Roman Catholicism and Islam); and a questioning of the right of certain non-Orthodox organized

religions such as Conservative Judaism and the neo-Orthodox 'Covenant Theologian' in Judaism (as well as Calvinists, Methodists, Baptists, etc., in Christianity) ---questioning of their right to authentically make demands on their adherents. For it is here desired to establish on an intellectual level the fact that confronts us in our day-to-day existence, namely, that uncertainty, aloneness and the necessity of each person making his own choices are the facts of our religious situation. In the third chapter it will be argued that only through freedom, aloneness and choice can modern man achieve a measure of salvation.

B. 'Authority' and 'Freedom'[34]

'Authority' may be the power to enforce obedience upon others to a set of commandments; In this sense, 'the government has authority' refers to the government's power to enforce obedience upon others. But it could conceivably be an unlawful government lacking any justifiable grounds for its power.

'Authority' may be the right to enforce obedience upon others to a set of commandments; In this sense, 'the government has authority' refers to the government's right to enforce obedience upon others. But we know nothing of the government's power---the particular government might well be a lawful one in exile. This second use of 'authority' as 'right,' 'justifiable grounds' will be the one employed throughout this thesis.

'Liberal Judaism' is defined as the contemporary forms if non-Orthodox Judaism such as Reform or Reconstructionist Judaism. Conservative Judaism is pointedly excluded from this definition of liberal Judaism because of the halakhic demands which it makes upon its members. Though permitting certain peripheral changes, the institutions of Conservative Judaism are virtually indistinguishable from those of Orthodox Judaism.

The issue to be explored in this chapter is the question of the Jew's right or authority to introduce innovation or change into his religion. The approach to this issue will depend upon the answer given to another question: In liberal Judaism who has authority? Where does authority to make decisions lie?

Conceptually it is helpful to distinguish between two phases within the human individual: (a) the decision-making self, and (b) the decision-executing self. In saying a person is free, I do not here deal with the question of whether a person's will is ultimately free or determined, but I refer to the authority of the individual's decision-making self to enforce obedience over his decision-executing self. In saying that some entity has authority over a person, I refer to that entity's right to supersede the decision-making self, and in its place to enforce the obedience of the decision-executing self.

It is presupposed,

it is understood as a self-evident proposition that unless there are good reasons, justifiable grounds to the contrary---every individual has the right to determine his own acts without external compulsion; has the right to make his own decisions;

has the right to be free.

If upon examination no convincing reasons or credible grounds are found for the surrender of the individual's right to determine his own acts---then it will be concluded that the individual poosesses the authority to make his own decisions. If this is our conclusion, then the individual Jew can be said to possess the right to introduce novelty or change into his religion.

C. Reasons for transfer of self-authority

What kind of reasons convince individuals to transfer self-authority for religious decisions to some ecclesiastical person or group? (Our concern is the tranfer of self-authority to some other entity for religious, not for familial or political grounds.) What kind of reasons convince?

The individual may choose whatever theory of Truth he desires, Coherence,[5] Correspondence,[6] Performative[7] or Pragmatic.[8] However the main sense of the word 'truth in this thesis is the performative notion whereby 'it is true' refers to the act of agreeing with, accepting or endorsing a statement.

Faith is here defined as the act of assent that judges a belief or statement to be true, e.g., 'God exists' is a statement. The act of faith is the judgement that the statement is true. An act of faith is an act of conviction. An individual may be convinced of certain beliefs, may judge given statements true on the basis of evidence or on the basis of no evidence. As there is no way to prove conclusively the superiority of one kind of faith over another, personal choice must determine the variety of faith that the individual finds compelling. When the individual finds faith with evidence to be more convincing, there are two varieties of evidence to choose from: subjective and objective.

I. Faith without evidence. Some religions, some individuals regard statements made without evidence---in fulfillment of the heart's needs and with trust in the religious object (God)---as the true and superior faith. To these people, evidence and reason, the tools of all scientific enquiry, are not considered adequate grounds for being convinced. The weakness of this

variety of faith is that the individual religionist is left without criteria for judging his own belief. Statements that are given for no reason at all are judged to be compelling. Without evidence there seems to be no way for the individual to distinguish between illusory phantasy created by his own mind and the reality of a true religion.

II. Faith on the basis of evidence:

A. Objective evidence: This is defined as evidence apprehended through man's natural faculties: sensation and reason---apprehended publicly, by more than one person. Objective evidence may be unique or repeatable:

1) Unique objective evidence: events witnessed by many observers but which cannot be witnessed repeatedly at huma will, e.g., the perception of the Red Sea cleaving to allow the Israelites passage on dry land. Neither those who were present, nor anyone else could produce a repetition of the evidence by human methods.

2) Repeatable objective evidence: events experienced by many observers, and which can be reproduced at will, such as the evidence of science today. Again, the proofs for the existence of God (such as the cosmological, ontological and teleological arguments) may be experienced repeatedly. Any number of persons, by inducing the premises and deducing the consequences, can experience these proofs any number of times.

B. Subjective evidence: events apprehended privately by one person alone, either externally through sensation or internally (as in a prophetic vision or the communion of prayer), e.g., Moses' experience at the Burning Bush. Subjective evidence is neither witnessed nor verified publicly. When accepted as evidence by anyone other than the person who apprehends it, subjective evidence must be accepted on the person's bare word or 'say so.'

Of the two kinds of faith on the basis of evidence, the variety where there is objective evidence as support for statements made, would seem to be the most compelling. Faith on the basis of subjective evidence seems less certain: (a) Subjective evidence cannot be verified for others except on the basis of 'I say it is so---now believe it!' (b) There is no convincing reason why any individual has to believe another's say so. (c) Apart from individual preference, there seems to be no way to choose between the say so of one individual and that of another, which conflicts

In Orthodox Judaism, as in all major Jewish religious systems (till Rosenzweig and Buber in the 20th century) the condition of faith---the condition on which the individual's assent to beliefs has been demanded---has been objective evidence. Truth for the system of beliefs was not claimed because they satisfied the heart's desire or any human need. Truth was claimed because objective evidence supported the belief. The objective evidence underlying the beliefs of Orthodox Judaism were: (A) miracles before more than witness. Miracles prove the existence of a theistic God in much the same way that a laboratory experiment proves the existence of any observable. The only reasonable explanation of the phenomenon of a miracle is the existence of a being (God) with intelligence who has power over the natural world. (B) Prophecy fulfilled: It is reasonable that only a being who controls and directs history can make the prediction of an event come true. Thus Deutero-Isaiah's proof for the existence of Yahweh is that the prophecies of the pre-exilic prophets foretelling the destruction of Israel had been fulfilled. (C) Direct sense experience of witnessing God reveal himself as he did before the Jewish people at Sinai---this is not only proof of God's existence, but also establishes that God laid down commandments.

There seem to be two main reasons why a religion that seeks to enforce obedience to a set of commandments (and thus to supersede the decision-making self of the individual) is in need of objective evidence as the condition of faith in its beliefs. 1) An individual must be convinced of his beliefs, he must give his assent, he must judge them to be true. Subjective evidence, which is not publicly verifiable, is suspect. The individual, unless he is schizophrenic, can scarcely say, 'These are my beliefs, I do not assent to them, I do not know if they are true.' When the individual judges beliefs to be true, these statements become his beliefs. 2) Those who possess religious truth, those who know the true beliefs, are considered to have the authority (right) to wield power. For example we may note the Pope in Roman Catholicism and the Sanhedrin in Pharisaic Judaism, who are considered to have the right to lay down religious dogma, 'true opinion' (Note that 'Orthodox' means 'true opinion').

Thus, because the individual in a religion is asked to give his right over his free action to someone else in authority, we can appreciate why the Jew has demanded the most stringent kind of proof to support any claim to religious truth. The basis of Jewish belief was objective evidence. Below is a summary of some of the characteristic beliefs of Pharisaic, rabbinic, 'Orthodox' Judaism (out of which liberal Judaism emerged[9]) which, backed by the objective evidence outlined above formed the basis of the argument for the claim of Orthodox Judaism to have the 'true opinion' and the consequent right to demand the transfer of self-authority outlined above.

1) One God alone exists, who is eternal, omnipotent, omniscient and omnibenevolent;

2) This one God is the sole creator and conserver of the universe;

3) By the very act of creation, he has authority over everything that he has created;

4) God, therefore, has authority over mankind;

5) Exercising his authority, God revealed the Pentateuch and Talmud to Moses. This revelation, being infallibly perfect, forever expresses the will of God. No new revelation has occurred or will occur to alter this expression of God's will;

6) The commandments of the creator-God (who has authority over mankind) are explicitly spelled out in the Pentateuch and Talmud, and these commandments are consequently binding upon men;

7) God has also delegated elements of his authority through the chain of tradition[10] from Moses to Joshua, to, eventually, the men of the Great Assembly, to the rabbis of the Talmud and to their descendants: the rabbis and scholars of Orthodox Judaism.

8) Therefore, inasmuch as the leaders of Orthodox Judaism act in the name of God, mankind is summoned to surrender certain portions of self-authority to these leaders, and to obey the commandments that issue from Orthodox Judaism, its texts and its leaders.[11]

D. Factors undermining the arguments for transfer of self-authority.

The beliefs of Orthodox Judaism, as those of all previous Jewish religious systems, rested upon the basis of objective evidence. A series of influences have undermined and discredited the evidence for the beliefs of Orthodoxy---three in particular. 1) The decreased credibility of the miracle and revelation claims of religion. 2) The scientific, critical study of the Bible and Talmud. 3) The refutation of the Aristotelian and medieval proofs for the existence of God.

I. By successfully fighting the maladies and the ills of the physical world, science ---and its underlying naturalistic metaphysical theories as to the nature of reality---earned the right to influence man's thinking. The method of science demands an approach to the objects (data) being studied, that is without presuppositions or prior theological commitments.

This methodological doubt raised questions about the traditional claims of miracles and revelation. Why had no miracles occurred when they were most needed? Where was there any evidence that the events recorded by tradition---such as revelation---had indeed occurred?

II. This demythological approach also influenced the study of Bible and Talmud. In the nineteenth century it was established to the satisfaction of many Jews that the monolithic view of the Jewish tradition was incorrect. Rather, the tradition was seen as being composed of points of view significantly different from one another. Jeremiah and Job accept nothing of the Pharisaic belief in a meaningful resurrection and after-life; Whereas the God of an Amos---to whom all peoples were equal---would entirely destroy Israel for its sins, the Pharisaic God loved Israel specially, and regardless of sin, would perpetuate His people into the Messianic era. Numerous such examples could be cited. In view of these differences among the parts of the tradition, it is evident that the tradition is not the product of a single, enduring, theistic God who consistently revealed Himself in history, but rather the work of many fallible human beings who, whatever their source of inspiration, were not of one mind as to the nature of God or the central beliefs of religion. Furthermore, the many inconsistencies and errors exposed by critical study of the texts, served as evidence to support the notion of the human authoritship of Scripture. i) "The idea of books entirely God-made, but written in the languages of men, in the native dialects of particular peoples and in the idioms of given times. . . is inconsistent and self-contradictory."[12] In view of the assumption implicit in the history of any area---namely, that later civilizations have been

superior in both knowledge and insight---it could at least be hoped that a divine book would somehow be able to avoid being culture-bound. This has not proved to be the case with the scriptures in question.[13]

ii) "The books themselves make not the slightest claim to the divine origin attributed to them by the theologians, but are in fact made up in the human manner."[14] ....The stamp of infallibility was affixed at a much later date.[15]

iii)..."The infallibility claim has led ...the church (and the synagogue)...into compromising positions with regard to the facts of archaeology, geology, biology, and history. As a result of the ... claim to infallible scriptures the church (synagogue) has run the risk of being in conflict with every advance of science."[16]

iv)"... biblical scholarship has established a historicity for the scriptures which, if correct, turns out to be an indictment of the intelligence of God when combined with the infallibility claim....In view of the conclusions of biblical scholarship that there are disparate and conflicting accounts in both the Old and the New Testaments, the divine authorship would require that God have been confused as to what actually took place."[17]

Once human authorship was determined, it was a small step to deny that miracles and supernatural revelation as literally described in Scripture ever occurred. Instead they were taken as the not unusual extravagances of the ancient historian who mixed fact, phantasy and myth in his literary creations. Examples in Reform Judaism of rejection of the arguments of Orthodox Judaism could be found in, for instance, the Pittsburgh platform:

> "We recognize in the Bible the record of consecration of the Jewish people to its mission as priest of the One God, and value it as the most potent instrument of religious and moral instruction. We hold that the modern discoveries of scientific researches in the domains of nature and history are not antagonistic to the doctrines of Judaism, the Bible reflecting the primitive ideas of its own age and at times clothing its conception of divine providence and justice dealing with man in miraculous narratives.
>
> We recognize in the Mosaic legislation a system of training the Jewish people for its mission during its national life in Palestine, and today we accept as binding only the moral laws and maintain only such ceremonies as elevate and sanctify our lives, but reject all such as are not adapted to the views and habits of modern civilization.
>
> We hold that all such Mosaic and Rabbinical laws as regulate diet, priestly purity and dress originated in ages and under the influence of ideas altogether foreign to our present mental and spiritual state. They fail to impress the modern Jew with a spirit of priestly holiness; their observance in our day is apt rather to obstruct than to further modern spiritual elevation."[18]

Or again, note the statements in the Columbus platform:

> "....the new discoveries of science, while replacing the older scientific views underlying our sacred literature, do not conflict with the essential spirit of religion as manifested in the consecration of man's will, heart and mind to the service of God and humanity.....The Torah, both written and oral, enshrines Israel's ever-growing consciousness of God and the moral law. It preserves the historical precedents, sanctions and norms of Jewish life and seeks to mould it in the patterns of goodness and holiness. Being products of the historical processes, certain of its laws have lost their binding force with the passing of the conditions that called them forth. But as a depository of permanent spiritual ideals, the Torah remains the dynamic source of the life of Israel. Each age has the obligation to adapt the teachings of the Torah to its basic needs in consonance with the genius of Judaism."[19]

These documents of Reform Judaism reflect the following facts: a) The objective evidence of Orthodox Judaism and its revealed documents, Bible and Talmud, was discredited. b) The inherited beliefs were now open to question. Objective evidence, the compelling reason for obedience no longer is available to support the traditional belief-structure. In the absence of objective evidence the concept of the 'basic needs' of Jews is introduced. c) By rejecting the

Bible and Talmud as infallibly revealed documents, and thereby rejecting their authority as the source of 'true opinion,' the early reformers undermined their own right (authority) to lay down commandments. This thought may have been present in their statement: 'Each age has the obligation to adapt the teachings of the Torah to its basic needs in consonance with the genius of Judaism.' The phrases 'basic needs' and 'genius of Judaism' are capable of holding a wide variety of meanings. There is no way for any individual to say, "This is the essential element in the genius of Judaism, this and no other." Note the similarity between this vague phraseology and Frankel's gestalt, "the entire body of positive Judaism."[20] The authority of what had previously been considered as infallible texts having been set aside, the road became open to individual choices of meaning.

III. A third influence which helped to discredit the evidence for the beliefs of Orthodoxy was the refutation of the Aristotelian and medieval proofs for the existence of God. For the Orthodox Jew who found the support of rational arguments valuable, the objective proofs for the existence of God drawn from philosophy were sufficiently close to his beliefs to give his faith in them some desired rationality. But again, from the nineteenth century on, the work of the eighteenth century philosophers (especially Hume and Kant) refuting the attempt at demonstrating the existence of the traditional God by rational means, closed this line of objective evidence to many Jewish thinkers of the 19th and 20th centuries.

E. Conclusions regarding authority in Reform Judaism

The general area of interest in this chapter has been authority in liberal Judaism, the specific focus of concern has been the Reform Jewish situation. The essential presupposition has been the affirmation that every

individual has the right to be free, unless there are justifiable grounds to the contrary. I have examined the various grounds, which have in the past convinced individuals in large numbers to transfer self-authority for religious decisions to Jewish leaders; the following are my conclusions.:

i) Faith on the basis of objective evidence (such as the faith of Orthodox Judaism) is no longer possible for the traditional beliefs, because the 'objective evidence' is considered by many Jews to be neither 'objective,' nor valid 'evidence.'

ii) Faith on the basis of subjective evidence cannot be considered to be generally compelling, although it may convince some individuals as grounds for transfer of authority. Because this variety of evidence demands a conviction that the individual presenting the evidence is neither lying nor mistaken, this variety of evidence is open to doubt because of the subjective element. (All evidence may, of course, be doubted but objective evidence is less doubtful, because more individuals have observed the evidence, and are able to observe the evidence.) Therefore it is not compelling as grounds for transfer of authority, unless the individual wishes to accept the statements of other individuals as being compelling for him. Absolute authority is not possible on the basis of subjective evidence, but conditional, self-chosen authority is possible.

Should any individual, out of his freedom to determine his acts, choose to accept his rabbi, or a group of rabbis, or even a given text or selection of written material become his 'authorities,' justified in telling him how to act in any given situation where the individual feels they are qualified to decide. Jewish leaders thus have much the same conditional authority that any medical practitioner has; there is no authority to compel belief or action; Any individual may at any time revoke the authority he has transferred to a person, group or text. A text, being the creation of a person or group (however inspired) may be chosen as an authority by an individual or group of individuals, provided that these individuals a)recognize that their choice is a subjective one, made without any evidence which would be open to public inspection, and b)accept that this particular

text is not binding upon Jews, that individuals are free to choose different texts or individuals as authorities----or free to make independent decisions with regard to belief or action.

iii) Faith without evidence is no more compelling than is faith on the basis of subjective evidence as grounds for surrender (transfer) of one's decision-making powers. Our age is not one wherein individuals blindly trust in the beliefs of others. That which has no evidence at all to support it, is unlikely to command support from individuals who ask for evidence and reasons as support for all statements made regarding health, welfare and indeed any call to action.

Thus our assumption of freedom of decision for all individuals has not been refuted. Any Reform Jewish individual (or for that matter any liberal Jewish individual) may, out of his freedom choose any external person, group of persons or text as his authority, but he cannot claim to have the true opinion. He may claim that from $\times$ source which he has chosen to be authoritative, he has received what is true opinion for him, but as a liberal Jew he cannot authentically claim to possess 'true opinion' for the objective basis for such a claim has yet to be proven.

Finally, the liberal Jew, being free to determine his actions, is also free to 1)accept the past with little change, if he so wills; 2)eliminate aspects from the past; 3) reinterpret elements inherited from the past; 4) introduce innovation and change to the various Jewish structures.

The freedom of choice and decision is the single, essential substantive notion of the Reform and liberal Jewish situation. All else is subject to individual choice.

Chapter 3

SALVATION AND RELIGIOUS SYMBOLS

A. 'Basic Needs'

The terms, ceremonies and rituals of the Jewish past were supported by objective evidence. With the breakdown of the traditional support, justification for the religious elements of modern Judaism must be sought elsewhere. Sometimes history and concepts such as 'Jewish Civilization' (See the last chapter in this thesis, on Kaplan) provides a partial answer. But when past precedents are not considered binding, attempts are made to link religious elements with the 'basic needs' of Jews. Thus a concern with the existential problems of man is of vital concern to religion today.

It is the second presupposition of this thesis that every act of a human being is ultimately performed because of some human desire or need. Any belief or practice is adhered to by the individual because it serves to satisfy some deep-seated wish, to resolve some problem in his existence. The reasons for an individual's ignoring or repudiating traditional revelation and miracle claims are the same as the reasons for his accepting these claims and his transfer of his self-authority----namely the resolution of a need or desire. Our contemporary religious problems have largely arisen because of conflicting desires both between individuals and within individuals. In a free religion, the conflicting wishes are resolved not by proclaiming one approach as the true one (Orthodoxy) but by affirming the right of individual variation. The institutions of liberal Judaism are seen as being a pluralistic framework within which modern Jews should be helped to resolve their desires in their individual, existential situation.[1]

Though this thesis, in the main, adopts a Freudian, psychoanalytic viewpoint, other modes of describing man's desires and problem-situation are

possible and indeed desirable. However, as the famous Freudian critique of religion has been put to little constructive use, and as the psychoanalytic theory of symbolism has never been applied to attempts at reconstructing the overt symbolism of the modern Jewish situation [2] ----therefore the Freudian approach is followed in this thesis.

B. A word on Lanugage

Words are the creation of men, and belong to those who use them. A look in any modern dictionary will reveal that words have changed in meaning and that no single usage of a word commands (or is able to command) allegiance----unless individuals in a particular discipline agree to take a single word-usage as being 'theirs.'

If terms and words which once referred to certain meanings are now used to point to different meanings, there need not be a conscious element of deception involved. In the past certain beliefs have been held to be substantive. Certain words were used to refer to these beliefs. But these beliefs have largely ceased to be credible to modern Jews. Liberal Jews using words which in the past have been associated with certain beliefs, cannot be assumed to be referring to them, for as there can be no single set of beliefs in liberal Judaism---freedom of decision being the only rule that has the right to be omnipresent---similarly there can be no single authoritative way of using words.

> "Does it better serve the purpose of communication to invent new terms, or is there an economy effected in retaining the old.... it is more efficient, where possible, to retain the old terms, and among the reasons for this may be listed the following: 1) These terms invariably possess more than one historical meaning at the present, and none therefore, can be employed in a systematic work, even to connote a past sense, without defining which sense of the past is meant. Consequently, since definition is required in any case, what does it matter whether the definition is drawn from previous usage or is a new one? 2) A new meaning is not entirely unrelated to the old one; it is intended to replace it. Laying down a new defintion, then, implies one of two things

> regarding the old meaning: that it is incorrect, or, if not necessarily incorrect, that it is inadequate for the purposes if Reform Judaism. In either case, appropriation of the same name for the new meaning signifies that it is intended to replace the old; that the latter has been considered and rejected as incompetent. 3) Words have uses other than as signs conveying references[3].....These uses of words other than for intellectual communication are deeply ingrained in the actuality of the word itself, and unlike intellectual meanings are transferred to other words only with the greatest difficulty.....these uses are important, particularly in the case of religion, where it is the being of man that is the object of concern, and not the bare communication of intellectual meaning alone."[4]

C. 'Religion'

Mordecai M. Kaplan has decided that Judaism is a civilization, that religion is part of the Jewish civilization, that our focus should be on the whole civilization rather than on the religious parts which are but a section. His approach, which is one of the possible viewpoints in a free situation, is discussed in detail in the last chapter of this thesis.

While the content of the term 'religion' has by no means exhausted the content of 'Judaism,' it has always been of central importance within the discrete continuum[5] which we call Judaism. Though the various Reform rabbis seem to have no single usage of the term 'religion' and their usages certainly differ from that which is spelled out below, these rabbis are of the general opinion that Reform Judaism is a religion. For instance the sixth plank of the Pittsburgh platform states: "We recognize in Judaism a progressive religion ever striving to be in accord with the postulates of reason. We are convinced of the utmost necessity of preserving the historical identity with our great past. Christianity and Islam being daughter religions of Judaism, we appreciate their mission to aid in the spreading of montheistic and moral truth...."[6] Also note the opening statement of the Columbus platform: "Judaism is the historical religious experience of the Jewish people.... Reform Judaism recognizes the principle of progressive development in religion and consciously applies this principle to spiritual as well as to cultural

and social life."[7] The sixth plank of the same platform reads: "In Judaism religion and morality blend into an indissoluble unity."[8] Thus, while such elements as peoplehood, the land of Israel, Morality, Ethical Monotheism, etc., are present in these statements of Reform Jewish self-definition, the word 'religion' is a recurring theme.

'Religion' comes from the Latin religio, meaning "to bind together" that which might otherwise fall apart.[9] Here are some of the better known definitions of 'religion.':

1) "Oman (theism): Religion is that which deals with the 'unseen environment of absolute worth which demands worship.'

2) Tillich (Christian existentialism): 'Religion is man's repose to ultimate concerns in terms of the ultimate.'

3) Schleiermacher....: 'Religion is a feeling of creaturely dependence on God.'....."[10]

Each thinker has worked out his own definition of the word. I shall now do the same. My criteria for the content of 'religion' are the following: a) There must be nothing within the content of the term that negates the freedom of decision which is the situation of the liberal Jew. b) The term, as defined, must be able to apply equally to all past Jewish religious systems, that is, one should be able to describe Judaism as a religion, more accurately as a series of religions. c) The term must refer to man's ultimate concerns and desires, to the problem structure of every individual.

A definition which meets these three criteria---our free present, our Jewish past and our central individual concerns---is Dr. Reines' "religion is man's response to his finitude," or more fully, "man's response to the conflict between what he essentially is and what he desires fundamentally to be."[11] "Salvation is the purpose of religion. Religion is defined as

'man's response to finitude'; and salvation is the name given to successful response."[12] "The ultimate question raised by the philosophy of religion with regard to any entity or action is the place that it occupies in a structure of salvation, that is, the function it has in bringing man to a state of realization and completion. This question is ultimate because the religious understanding conceives man to be born a potential and inchoate creature whose essential search it is to become truly what he is. Man conducts this search in religious activity, wherein he seeks to understand his condition, arrive at knowledge of his ideal end, and apprehends the means whereby he may attain it."[13]

D. Symbols and Symbolism - A Psychoanalytic view

In chapter one a preliminary distinction was made between religious symbols and substantives. A substantive remains defined as: a religious element valuable in itself, unique and irreplaceable in the particular religious system being considered.

'Symbol' requires further comment. In light of the fact that a free religion enables the individual to choose, it is necessary to examine the nature of symbolism on the individual level before proceeding to deal with the shared symbolism of a group or the symbolism of a religious institution, such as Reform Judaism. The psychoanalytic theory of symbolism is here summarized. Of all the vast literature on the subject, two papers, by Ernest Jones[14] and Sidney G. Margolin[15] have been particularly helpful. Six points by Rank and Sachs[16] form the basis of much of Jones' discussion, and will be here used as the outline which this summary will follow.

1) A symbol is that which represents or substitutes (characteristically in concrete, sensory form)[17] for an 'idea' (i.e., an affect or a concept or both)[18] which is repressed and thus unconscious.[19] Only repressed ideas

are symbolized or need to be symbolized.[20] The modes of thought most open to the usage of symbols are the most primitive (both onto-genetically and phylogenetically) and represent a reversion to earlier, simpler stages of mental development. Therefore these modes of thought are more often met within conditions that favor such a reversion (e.g., fatigue, drowsiness, bodily illness, neurosis, various forms of 'insanity' and dreams---wherein conscious mental life is only minimally present.).[21] The number of ideas represented by symbols is less than a hundred. They share both a somatic sensory component and a significance for the individual's biological survival. They all pertain to the physical self, members of the immediate family, food and feeding, birth, love, or death. In the unconscious mind of the individual these ideas never lose their primitive, original importance.[22]

> "The essential function of all forms of symbolism, using the word in the broadest and most popular sense, is to overcome the inhibition that is hindering the free expression of a given feeling-idea, the force derived from this, in its forward urge, being the effective cause of symbolism. It always constitutes a regression to a simpler mode of apprehension. If the regression proceeds only a certain distance, remaining conscious or at most preconscious, the result is metaphorical, or what Silberer calls 'functional' symbolism. If, owing to the strength of the unconscious complex, it proceeds further---to the level of the unconscious---the result is symbolism in the strict sense. The circumstance that the same image can be employed for both of these functions should not blind us to the important differences between them. Of these, the principal one is that with the metaphor the feeling to be expressed is over-sublimated, whereas with symbolism it is under-sublimated; the one relates to an effort that has attempted something beyond its strength, the other to an effort that is prevented from accomplishing what it would."[23]

2) The possible variation in the meaning of a given symbol is 'exceedingly restricted.' There is a striking constancy of meaning in a variety of different areas: dreams, myths, etc.[24] A myth is in this thesis defined

as a symbolic narrative "of historical events that serves to unfold part of the world view of a people or explain a practice, belief or natural phenomenon."[25]

3) The individual has a restricted choice in the creation of a symbol for in the formation of symbols, factors shared by large classes of men, or by all of mankind are more important as determinants than individual factors. Thus, the individual cannot choose which idea will be represented by a given symbol. But he can determine which symbol will be used to represent a given idea, and he is occasionally able to represent a particular idea with a symbol not previously used as a symbol. The ideas are not chosen or created by the individual, the symbols may well be. But whenever two or more people use the same symbols, they refer to the same ideas. Symbolism is always 'recreated afresh' out of individual material. Much of existing symbolism is constant in meaning, because all men have the same 'fundamental and perennial interests.'[26]

4) Symbolism has an evolutionary basis, both as regards the individual and as regards the society.[27] The various symbols are compromises between the 'pleasure principle' (the tendency to seek pleasure and avoid pain) and the 'reality principle' (the striving to learn to deal with reality in the way which is easiest and least energy-consuming).[28]

> "The mind always tends to assimilate a new percept in terms of some unconscious complex, and every step in progress in the line of the reality-principle connotes, not only a use of this primordial association, but also a partial renunciation of it; a surrendering of the personal, subjective factor and an attending, which might almost be called sensorial, to the objective attributes of the new percept. Let us follow the example----of the sun. One of the earliest conceptions of this was that it was a mighty eye, the resemblances -- in connection with light, etc -- being fairly evident. Later it was regarded as a movable lamp, and later still as a hot gaseous body around which the earth

> revolves. If in one of these later stages of knowledge the image of the sun appeared in a dream as a substitute for that of an eye, we should, of course, call it a symbol, but in the first stage the ophthalmic idea of the sun would most accurately be described as a symbolic equivalent. Now, how did the progress in knowledge take place, and what is the relation of the symbol to the future idea of the sun? The first stage is simple enough. It is nothing but an identification of the new percept with an old one, a temporarily successful assimilation of it in terms of the older and more familiar one.....it is truly astounding how the human mind can escape paying attention to evident, and even important, observations in which it is not interested. But, and this is the all-important point, in this second stage the assimilation does not lead to pure symbolism; it is enough to direct attention, and give interest, to the fresh observation, but this is interpreted by a process of ratiocination in conjunction with the facts of external reality, no longer solely in terms of the pre-existing idea, as in the first, more symbolical stage of knowledge. Insofar as it is no longer thus interpreted in the older fashion, there is involved a corresponding renunciation, in favour of the reality-principle and its advantages, of the pleasure yielded by the easier and more primitive process of complete assimilation. According to the findings of psychoanalysis, all mental progress is accompanied with partial renunciation of some primitive form of pleasure -- which is probably the reason why it is so slow -- and the process just indicated is no exception to the rule."[29]

5) In symbolism the unconscious mind notices and compares two ideas, which the conscious mind would not consider together. An analysis of the linguistic, philological, etymological or colloquial origins of the word denoting the symbol usually reveals some association with the idea that is symbolized.[30] An association which seems superficial to the reason may often be of significance in feeling---especially in the unconscious.[31]

6) Symbols are ubiquitous, often found in different fields of thought, dreams, wit, poetry, various mental disorders, etc., and found in myths, cults and religions all over the world.[32] The number of symbols is extraordinarily high, and can easily be reckoned in the thousands. But the number of ideas (see 1) above) that are symbolized are very limited, "so that in the interpretation of them the complaint of monotony is naturally often heard."[33]

7) Finally, note Margolin's statements: "Symbols invariably indicate that something new and without conscious precedent has occurred. The changed circumstance must be named in order to fix it in communication as an historical event. In addition, the symbol contains the anxiety that followed the awareness of the new experience and the disruption of the equilibrium that preceded it. The shift from monarchy to republics, from capitalism to socialism, from animistic magical pantheism to monotheism, from the uterus to the bassinet, from being the firstborn to the eldest child, from mother's breast to the laissez-faire of the family board, from autoeroticism to external sexual objects, from the security of the family to the uncertainties of the outer world, from life to death, from sexual latency to puberty to marriage, from day to night and from one season to the other, from bodily hedonistic anarchy to voluntary self-control -- all these are but a few of the immense changes which impinge upon us and which we must acknowledge if we are to survive. It seems that we are in a continuous search of the security, predictability, and stability in the new and changing phase, which we had experienced in the older and obsolete phase. These feelings of happiness and gratification never change, only the circumstances in which we seek them change."[34]

E. Religious symbols and myths

'Religion' has been defined. The psychoanalytic theory of symbolism has been outlined. It is now necessary to connect these two notions and to draw inferences regarding religious symbolism.

A religious symbol is here defined as a religious element (such as a belief, ceremony or ritual) which represents or substitutes for aspects of man's finitude. Symbols both represent man's finitude and suggest modes

of action for resolving this problem. The problem of finitude (which will be spelled out in greater detail in sections F and G), growing as it does out of the individual's (and the people's) more primitive past, and heavily laden with the possibility of negative emotional states (anger, guilt, fear, anxiety, depression, etc.,) is repressed and is largely handled by means of symbols and symbolic narratives (myths). Below follows a discussion of some of the implications of this definition of religious symbols.

1) The beliefs and practices which are part of our Jewish heritage are products of modes of thought which are characteristic of earlier stages of development in the history of the individual and the people. They are therefore more often met within conditions that resemble the conditions in which the beliefs and practices were originally produced and observed. For instance, the structure of Pharisaic Judaism was evolved in the insecure and oppressive environment of Greco-Roman rule in the Middle East.: Nothing revives the observances of the traditional beliefs, customs and ceremonies better than an unstable society wherein the Jew feels insecure and helpless.

2) Jewish symbols are manifest expressions for ideas that are largely unconscious to most Jews. A good example is Jones' discussion of the wedding ring, which "is an emblem of marriage, but is not a symbol of it." A man wooing a woman instinctively gives her objects such as bracelets and rings, all of which have the property of holding that which is passed through them, and are symbols of the female sex-organ. Similarly the central act of passing the wedding ring over the bride's finger symbolizes the act of love, so central to marriage. "The ceremony connotes a group of abstract ideas, fidelity, continuity, etc., with which the ring is....brought into

association, and for which it can then serve as an emblem, though never as a symbol."[35] Again, the sexual overtones of the lulab and ethrog on the festival of Sukkoth are unconscious to most Jews. Repressed material, such as the content of these and other religious symbols, generally arouses reactions of surprise, incredulity and repugnance when brought to the conscious awareness of individuals who are untrained in this mode of thinking. Thus there is little value in teaching the unconscious meanings of the symbols to children or adults who are unfamiliar with psychoanalytic thinking. A symbol need not be explained or interpreted in order to be a meaningful and relevant symbol. From the field of medicine the example can be shown of the expert who, while able to understand the true significance of a particular symptom, yet does not always find it advantageous or necessary to instruct the patient on the implications of the symptom in order to heal the patient. Similarly while it is necessary that religious leaders understand the significance of the various symbols, it is by no means advantageous to instruct all religionists at all times in this meaning, though the symbols be used to assist the religionists to achieve salvation.

3) Though the metaphors and rationale relating a particular religious symbol to the whole of 'Judaism' may have varied, the religious symbols have had considerable constancy in 'depth'-meaning. Thus, Sukkoth, which in biblical times had been the festival of the harvest, became emblematic of Israel's sojourn in the wilderness, in the rabbinic justification of the day. Similarly, Bar mitzvah, from having been a celebration of the onset of puberty, became in time the occasion when the boy became legally responsible in rabbinic Judaism, and in modern times seems to have become an occasion to celebrate "the boy's becoming a man." (Whatever that means!)

4) That which is referred to, in an ultimate sense, is the problem structure of man, and the various attempted resolutions to the problem. Finitude is present in all men, and therefore in all Jews. Because individual Jews in large numbers often found themselves in similar geographic, economic, social and political situations, the symbolism which they found meaningful was largely the same. Religious symbols held in common by a number of individuals, will here be termed 'shared symbols.' It is understood that shared symbols reflect common concerns and a shared notion of reality, divine providence etc. The shared symbols can be defined as the acceptable compromises between on the one hand the pleasure-principle within each individual, and on the other hand the acceptable realities of social life and communal existence. The many forms of shared symbolism, such as creeds, the recitation and the reenacting of selected historical events, ritual and ceremonial acts, are discussed in the following chapter. A shared symbolism may be studied from the various viewpoints of different disciplines. From the standpoint of this thesis, the crucial value of a shared religious symbolism is that when the symbols are 'alive,' 'working,' fulfilling their central function, a) they provide the individual with a notion of reality and the nature of existence, with beliefs about the world (this is of value to all, but especially important for children); and b) they help the individual to live authentically (in the language of existentialism), to make a satisfactory compromise between his desires for maximum pleasure and minimum pain, and his notion or reality. The definitions of religious symbol and a shared symbolism as used in this thesis are more comprehensive than those used by Dr. Reines,[36] but his list of functions performed by a 'common symbolism' certainly apply to my 'shared symbolism.':

1)"to bring a person, with full being, into relation with the divine aspects of existence;

2) to evoke meaningful moods and positive attitudes;

3) to enrich our sense of wonder and perception of reality by focusing our attention on cosmic events such as the solstices and equinoxes, or earthly processes such as growth and maturation;

4) to quicken our sense of history and of a shared past by commemorating significant past events;

5) to provide a productive celebration of significant life-cycle events;

6) to provide a family, through home ceremonies, with enriched moments of shared experience;

7) to enable a community to communicate to one another its joy on happy occasions and its compassion on sad ones;

8) to provide, by its distinctive nature, a sense of common identity and shared purpose to those who participate in it;

9) to provide children with an elementary knowledge of their religious community, since, at first, the true beliefs of religion are beyond their comprehension."[37]

5) The Jewish beliefs and practices evolved from pagan beginnings and primitive (i.e., early) conceptions of reality to more modern times and different views of reality and how to react to the world. This fact of evolution is well documented in books such as Hayyim Schauss' writings on the traditional Jewish festivals and customs,[38] as well as being clearly shown by comparing, for instance, festivals, the notions of death, God, etc., in the Bible and the Talmud. Similarly, there is an evolution in the life of the individual Jew from more primitive to more advanced views of reality. As the individual's evaluation of his surroundings changes, his personal, individual symbolism will also change, and he will be in need of a shared symbolism that reveals the shared outlook, shared concerns and

common identity of modern Jews. We need a new shared Jewish symbolism.

Why must this new shared symbolism occur in Jewish institutions? Why not have this new kind of religious symbolism elsewhere than within the synagogue or religious school?[39] a) It must be clearly understood that there is no necessity that the new shared symbolism be Jewish. Indeed there is ample evidence that other institutions have shared symbolisms for their members---political, social and economic institutions. Our free situation certainly allows for Jews to solve their finitude outside of the Jewish institutions, indeed the possibility of the organized Jewish institutions dying must be faced----Judaism may be annihilated by freedom.[40] But, b) there is an economy in maintaining the Jew in his identity using the Jewish institutions. The word 'Jew' has so many emotional overtones that for most Jews it is irreplaceable, it 'works' The individual who is a 'Jew,' likes to do 'Jewish things,' like to be together with other 'Jews,' he likes and predictably will continue to like to have a Jewish identity which marks him as a member of a group, community, people, religion, civilization, (even for some individuals a nation or a race). The Jew, like any other human individual likes to belong. If groups as comparatively trivial as sporting clubs, Rotary, Kiwanis, etc., can command the fierce participation of members in their rituals and actions---how much the more powerful can be the support of Jews for Jewish institutions which define themselves as dealing with their most fundamental concerns. The Jew who sought for authority, found it in the Jewish institutions of his time, and thereby he was able to find salvation. The Jew who seeks freedom should be able to find it in his contemporary Jewish institutions, and should

also be thereby enabled to find a meaningful and authentic mode of existence. c) Finitude, Salvation and shared symbolism have always been essentially 'Jewish.' The fact that the focus of religion and symbolism is being changed should not affect the 'Jewishness' of this endeavor. The foci of biblical, rabbinic, philosophic and modern liberal Judaism have all differed considerably, and will certainly differ from the focus of a future Judaism. Past religious forms may not have been aware that they were providing the individuals, through their symbolism, with salvation, authentic responses to finitude, meaningful compromises between the pleasure and reality principles---but this was what held the allegiance of Jews: their shared symbolism. That modern Jewish leaders are conscious of the role that the beliefs and practices play in Jewish religious life---this fact should not diminish the role of a shared symbolism.

F. The shared symbolism of Orthodox Judaism has ceased to be the true symbolism of the modern Jew.

Judaism may well be described as a discrete continuum of responses to finitude. Each response offered the individual Jew a variety of beliefs, myths and practices whereby he could better cope with his contemporary reality. Perhaps the clearest example is offered by the belief-structure of Orthodox (Pharisaic, rabbinic) Judaism.:

Man's problem of finitude may be summarized in the following seven points. a) Man's desire for knowledge, contrasted with the facts that what he knows is uncertain and limited; b) His desire to know how to act in the right way, contrasted with uncertainty as to what is the right way; c) His desire to be all-powerful, contrasted with the clear facts of his powerlessness and ineptness; d) His desire to control reality, contrasted with the evidence that events such as geography, economics, politics etc., determine

much of his life, that he is at the mercy of illness and chance, that without sufficient---or with too much---oxygen, heat, water, food, etc., man will die; e) Man's desire not to be alone, contrasted with the facts of his being an individual who invariably finds himself separated from those whom he knows and loves, whether separated by geography or death; f) His desire for sex in an infinite, number of ways with an infinite number of people and objects ('polymorphous perverse') producing infinite pleasure---contrasted with his physical limitations, and the restrictions imposed on him by his society; g) His desire to live forever and never die, contrasted with the knowledge that all men have died. This last facet of finitude has been much dealt with in the existentialist literature. The fear of death is indeed at the very center of all the negative states: anxiety loneliness, depression, etc. (The purely Freudian approach would describe man's anxieties as arising out of his unresolved infantile and Oedipal longings.)

Applying these seven points to Orthodox Judaism, we notice that: a) In orthodox Judaism the Jew has certain knowledge. Torah and Talmud contain the infallible word of the Creator-God. b) Being in the possession of certain knowledge, the Jew knows from this literature what the right and the good consist of. c) Man is admitted to be absolutely helpless and inept. God is the all-powerful father who knows all and brings all things to pass. Only God's goodness and his love of Israel, his covenantal partner, will enable man in general and the Jew in particular to survive. Freud,[41] Feuerbach[42] and others would recognize the projection present in this viewpoint. d) While the world seems harsh, there is no chance. God has caused everything, God wills everything. If man will do the good, God will protect

him and if necessary will perform miracles to save him---witness the miracles reported in Bible and Talmud. e) Man is never alone, for God the father is always present. He listens to the prayers of his children and takes care of them. f) The sexual aspect of finitude is discussed below. g) If the Jew will act rightly, he will be granted life eternal from the omnipotent and omniscient deity.

Using classically Freudian language, we can analyze the Orthodox resolution of finitude in terms of the infantile and Oedipal longings.: Man is a child, God is the projected father-figure, the parental image, the "source from whom all blessing flows" to use the language of liturgy.God will look after his children and give them eternal life and security in the next world. Man, the rebel against God, is sinful. God is perfectly good. "We have sinned, we have transgressed." (See in the next chapter the discussion of the High Holidays.) For our evil meditations we have merited constant punishment, for having rebelled against the will of the omnipotent Father we have earned death---but God in His great goodness allows us to live and protects us from evil. In dealing with man's sex drives, Orthodox Judaism generally avoided the extremes of Christianity (sex is a sin of the flesh, the individual should marry Jesus (monks) or Mary (nuns)) or of Islam which promised the believer a sensual heaven. While both of these approaches to sex are present in traditional Jewish thinking, sexuality in Orthodox Judaism was neither absolutely encouraged nor absolutely proscribed---it was regulated to the nth degree. While the Yetzer hara should not be rooted out of man and destroyed, women and the role they play in a man's life are carefully (and some might add, compulsively) regulated.

(quoted in section D) about the changing human conception of the sun. Speaking about the assimilation of new perceptions of reality with old ones he stated: "the assimilation does not lead to pure symbolism; it is enough to direct attention, and give interest, to the fresh observation, but this is interpretation by an external reality, no longer solely in terms of the pre-existing idea, as in the first, more symbolical stage of knowledge. Insofar as it is no longer thus interpreted in the older fashion, there is involved a corresponding renunciation in favour of the reality principle and its advantages, of the pleasure yielded by the easier and more primitive process of complete assimilation...all mental progress is accomplished with partial renunciation of some primitive form of pleasure."

The facts are that twentieth century man has no evidence for an after-life, for prayers being answered, for being specially 'cared for.' The improvements in the world have been effected by the hand of man. In modern times the good and much of the evil of the world comes from man's actions. Man today knows more than ever in the past; he is more powerful than ever in the past; he finds himself no longer, as an individual, having to strive for sheer survival (though the future of the species may be in question); He finds new ways of pleasure, enjoyment and happiness, which his forebears never dreamed of. Thus the belief-and ceremonial-structure that seems to describe man as an errant child, helpless to affect his objective reality----this structure, though truly symbolic of man's central problems, are no longer reflecting his view of the real world. They no longer represent the conception of reality of the modern Jew. Modern man cannot affirm in his being the outmoded beliefs of his ancestors because his reality-

The beliefs which have been the data for this analysis are the basis on which the entire liturgical structure was constructed. Thus these beliefs were, in whole or in part, present in every life-cycle ceremony and every calendar-celebration. The beliefs of the Orthodox Jew symbolized for him his harsh reality, his hostile environment, his helplessness and insecurity, symbolized these facts and helped him to find the salvation which his situation allowed.

The reality of twentieth century urban middle class Jewish life is vastly different from the uncertain and precarious existence of our grandparents in Eastern Europe and their forebears throughout the painful centuries from Roman times till the modern era. Though the conception of reality changes slower than does the reality itself, the conception of reality of modern man is considerably different from the world view of medieval or primitive man. The Copernican revolution may have been slow to affect the thinking of others, but with increasing rapidity men's cherished thoughts about the nature of the world and of man were shattered by Darwin, Einstein, Freud and their innumerable successors. From an age where change was the exception, we seem to have advanced into an era where change is the norm.

To repeat the Margolin statement quoted in section D above: "It seems that we are in a continuous search of the security, predictability, and stability in the new and changing phase, which we had experienced in the older and obsolete phase. These feelings of happiness and gratification never change, only the circumstances in which we seek them change." The problem confronting man today, as always, is how to find salvation, how to live a life without the gnawing anxiety which makes life seem in authentic, senseless and void. Our changed view of reality parallels Jones' remarks

principle questions the reality of these beliefs and his desire to live authentically, free of dread and anxiety, forces him to live according to what he knows to be real.

The inherited belief-structure of Orthodox Judaism no longer reflects the modern Jew's view of reality. These beliefs may still receive the individual's lip-service. Some individual's may still hold onto this primitive (early) form of pleasure, for indeed the notion of reality implicit in the traditional structure is one way towards solving the problem of finitude. But for growing numbers of Jews these beliefs are mere words, not describing their view of the world. That which is no longer credible can scarcely form the center of one's life's meaning.

The following statements by Rollo May are here pertinent: "It is not---that our patients have lost their capacity to symbolize---but rather, there they have no available contents for the symbols which they can believe in wholeheartedly enough to make commitment of themselves possible. This is a central aspect of the 'emptiness' experienced by so many contemporary sensitive persons. They can transcend the concrete situation indeed, but land in a symbolic vacuum."[43] (Traditional values)"are in process of radical disintegration and transition. This makes the psychological task of modern man much more difficult as he struggles to find and work out not only symbols by which he can relate to his world but also symbols by which he can know himself and work out his own identity."[44] "A society furnishes means for its members to deal with excessive guilt, anxiety and despair in its symbols and myths. When no symbols have transcendant meaning (e.g., today) the individual no longer has his specific aid to transcend normal crises of life, 'such as chronic illness, 'loss of employment, war,

death of loved ones and his own death, and the concomitant anxiety and guilt. In such periods he has an 'infinitely harder time dealing with his impulses and instinctual needs and drives, a much harder time finding his own identity and is prey thus to neurotic guilt and anxiety."[45]

The old responses to finitude, and the symbols and myths which clothed them, have been rejected---is the religious endeavor then over? The answer, if the present definition of 'religion' is the one meant, is an emphatic negative, for man's finitude is today more than ever in need of resolution. Drug addiction, sexual promiscuity and increased violence among modern youth are but a few examples of behavior indicating (in the language of this thesis) unresolved finitude, (in psychoanalytic language) neurotic guilt and anxiety, (in existentialist language) angst and feelings of profound inauthenticity. Herein lies the task of religion today. What is required is for organized religious institutions to take note that a new set of compromises are required between the unconscious drives and the reality principle. These new symbols are already in part present in our time in the language of our youth. Organized religion, if it accepts its role as the bearer of salvation, must utilize the symbols of the new view of reality. If Jewish institutions do this, the identity of the Jew will be immeasurably strengthened and Jews will once again find salvation. Liberal Judaism, Reform Judaism in particular, provides the individual with the freedom to experiment with new forms of shared symbolism within the religious institutions.

G. Religious Symbols and the Standing-alone View of Reality.

To paraphrase a statement by Rollo May: The healing power of the symbol and the myth[46] has two aspects. 1) Both symbol and myth elicit and

bring into awareness the repressed, unconscious primitive urges, longings, dreads and other psychic content---the regressive function of symbol and myth. 2) Symbol and myth reveal new goals, new ethical insights and possibilities, new ways of working out the fundamental problems on a higher level of integration. This is the progressive function of symbol and myth. 47

These are the two ways, basically, for an infant to view the world. One view I shall here call the "hand-holding' approach to the world, where the individual seeks security and comfort through a dependent relationship with his parents. The other I shall here call the 'standing-alone' view, where the individual seeks separation, independence from his parents and is willing to forego parental security in the enjoyment derived (or which he hopes will be derived) from exploring the world on his own and acting on his own. Both approaches are ways of obtaining maximum pleasure and minimum pain. Both outlooks are present in every infant, and indeed in every human individual. Either 'weltanschauung' contains in its symbols and myths both regressive and progressive functions.

In the past the hand-holding view dominated, being sumbolized in the structure of beliefs and practices of Orthodox Judaism, the shared symbolism of Orthodox Jews. Increasingly today individuals lean towards the standing alone outlook. Note how our language reflects the infant within us striving to stand on his own feet, away from parental protection; note how the language of today symbolizes our primitive longings and our new goals.:

"Do your own thing
Stand up for waht you believe
Stand up for your rights
Don't just accept---question, explore, find out
for yourself."

Though on one level it is a true description of reality, the anti-authority argument of the second chapter of this thesis may well be understood on another level as being a rationalization, a modern myth representing this primitive and largely unconscious approach of contemporary man. All men make use of symbols and myths---for they are the ways in which we handle our inner realities with regard to our conceptions of the world and our conceptions of ourselves. But apart from certain social 'freedom movements' attached to religious institutions in various parts of the world, few religious institutions treat man as anything other than an infant whose goal in life is to return to the security and safety of the parental arms. The traditional religions are overlooking the tendency of modern man to take the standing alone approach. Though less secure than the traditional approach, man increasingly strives to stand away from parents, to develop on his own, to do that which he wants to do rather than that which he is told to do. Herein lies much pain, for the old security is lacking, but herein lies also the promise of much pleasure, for the individual is free to a large extent to follow his own interests in life. This view of life is increasingly being propagated by the modern mass media.

It is here suggested that the facts of the high percentages of suicide, alcoholism, drug addiction, psychosis, etc., of feelings of guilt, anxiety, anger, etc., these facts are a direct outgrowth of the unresolved conflict between the two wills, the two views of what reality is and ought to be. On the one hand the shared symbolism which traditional institutions such as the church and synagogue rears children in the hand-holding view of reality---a view which Christian and Islamic countries have found to be most congenial to their purposes. On the other hand, the realities of modern

life force the standing-alone view upon him, and undermine the outlook in which he was raised. The result is that ever larger numbers of individuals manifest the above mentioned negative states and symptoms---for they are unable to come up with satisfactory compromises between their pleasure-principles and their reality-principles on their own, and there is far too little of shared myth and symbol to help them achieve such compromises.

In the previous section the hand-holding view of Orthodox Judaism was spelled out, its resolutions of finitude were outline. Below is an outline of how a modern, liberal Judaism might utilize the standing-alone approach to deal with finitude. a) The individual faces the fact that he has no certain knowledge. He will have to seek his own small area of knowledge, but even here his knowledge is fallible and legitimately open to doubt. Man will have to learn how to live with uncertainty; he must be reared so that he no longer expects or looks for absolutes and certainties. b) Beyond the guidelines of law laid down by his fellow-mortals, the individual has to decide what is right or wrong. As is evident today, traditions and inherited notions hold little water with modern man who feels he must determine his own future. Increasingly modern man wants to decide his own standards and guidelines---and who has the right to say to him nay? c) While my species is powerful, I, everyman, find myself limited but not absolutely so. I cannot have a perfect 'batting' score, but I can achieve a certain 'batting' average. I can grow up to be an adult, a leader in areas of my choice, a father (mother), a creator in my own right. Thus I no longer need a projected parental image on the world. If the word 'God' is to have ongoing relevance and significance, it will have to refer to reality as viewed by modern man. (See for instance Buber's parentheistic notion of God quoted in part below) d) The individual is largely at the mercy of his

political, economic and social environment, and of chance, but mankind acting together is able to reduce many of the more negative factors. Modern science and technology have demonstrated that pressing problems can be solved and life made more livable. It has virtually become a dogma of our times that if we will act now we can improve our chances tomorrow. Thus the objective causes of anxiety can be largely eliminated. For the rest, man will just have to learn that chance operates, that accidents do occur, that his life is always precarious. e) I, everyman, am always alone: No man can make my decisions for me unless I allow him to---which is also my decision. I know of no eternal father who will care for me or protect me or listen to me or give me life eternal. In my standing alone, I must seek my own spouse, my own friends, my own life. At any point, death or disease may befall my dear ones, and I may be alone again. f) While society lays down guidelines and norms of sexual behavior, it is becoming clearer with the passing of time that individuals have the right to determine their own standards of sexual behavior. Sex is increasingly being openly discussed, and is increasingly being viewed as a prime source of pleasure, and as such is not considered 'evil.' While an individual in society certainly has to take into account the attitudes of his contemporaries, individuals are increasingly able to determine their own modes of sexual behavior---another aspect of the standing alone approach. g) I, everyman, am going to die. I have no certain knowledge of an after-life, even though I might wish it. The ultimate cause of all anxisty is the fear of death. If my life is to be freed from the negative emotional states and social symptoms mentioned earlier, I, everyman, must be able to face my fear of death and conquer it. This is

the true meaning of salvation. The individual must learn to be honest with himself, with his fears and his longings. Mediating between his desires for pleasure and his knowledge of what is real, what is possible and probable---the individual must learn to live his short life in the way which is most meaningful to him. Without certainty, the individual is always alone, over the abyss of death---and must choose that way of life which will give him the maximum amount of pleasure that his real situation will allow. Let him indeed live today as if he had no tomorrow, for he has certainty only of the here and the now.

To Freud, traditional religion (in this thesis called the hand-holding approach) was an illusion.

> "...I must contradict you when you ...argue that men are completely unable to do without the consolation of the religious illusion, that without it they could not bear the troubles of life and the cruelties of reality. That is true, certainly, of the men into whom you have instilled the sweet---or bittersweet---poison from childhood onwards. But what of the other men, who have been sensibly brought up? Perhaps those who do not suffer from the neurosis will need no intoxication to deaden it. They will, it is true, find themselves in a difficult situation. They will have to admit to themselves the full extent of their helplessness and their insignificance in the machinery of the universe; they can no longer be the centre of creation, no longer the object of tender care on the part of a beneficent Providence. They will be in the same position as a child who has left the parental house where he was so warm and comfortable. But surely infantilism is destined to be surmounted. Men cannot remain children forever; they must in the end go out into the 'hostile life.' We may call this 'education to reality.' Need I confess to you that the sole purpose of my book (The Future of an Illusion) is to point out the necessity of this forward step?"[40]

From a different standpoint Martin Buber's existentialist writings, express well what is here called the standing alone approach:

> "How are we to understand that God...said to Adam: 'Where art thou?' ...In every era God calls to everyman: 'Where are you in your world? So many years and days of those allotted to you

have passed, and how far have you gotten in your world?' ....Adam hides himself to avoid rendering accounts, to escape responsibility for his way of living. Every man hides for this purpose, for every man is Adam and finds, himself in Adam's situation. To escape responsibility for his life, he turns existence into a system of hideouts. And in thus hiding again and again 'from the face of God,' he enmeshes himself more and more deeply in perversity. A new situation thus arises, which becomes more and more questionable with every day, with every new hideout....This is the situation into which God's question falls. This question is designed to awaken man and destroy his system of hideouts; it is to show man to what pass he has come and to awake in him the great will to get out of it.

Everything now depends on whether man faces the question. Of course, every man's heart....will tremble when he hears it. But his system of hideouts will help him to overcome this emotion. For the Voice does not come in a thunderstorm which threatens man's very existence; it is a 'still small voice' and easy to drown. So long as this is done, man's life will not become a <u>way</u>. Whatever success or enjoyment he may achieve, whatever power he may attain and whatever deeds he may do, his life will remain way-less, so long as he does not face the Voice. Adam faces the Voice, perceives his enmeshment and avows 'I hid myself'; this is the beginning of man's way. The decisive heart-searching is the beginning if the human way."[49]

Buber quotes the 'Seer' of Lublin as saying:

"It is impossible to tell men what way they should take. For one way to serve God is through learning, another through prayer, another through fasting, and still another through eating. Everyone should carefully observe what way his heart draws him to, and then choose this way with all his strength." Buber then continues: "This story tells us something about our relationship to such genuine service as was performed by others before us. We are to revere it and learn from it, but we are not to imitate it. However small our achievements may be in comparison with those of our forefathers, they have their real value in that we bring them about in our own way and by our own efforts....Every man's foremost task is the actualization of his unique, unprecedented and never-recurring potentialities, and not the repetition of another, and be it even the greatest, has already achieved.....Mankind's great chance lies precisely in the unlikeness of men, in the unlikeness of their qualities and inclinations. (Buber then links this point to his own untraditional, panentheistic theology:)[50] God's all inclusiveness manifest itself in the multiplicity of the ways that lead to him, each of which is open to one man."[51]

H. Concluding remarks

Modern man not only has the right to make his own decisions, his is the responsibility to choose. That modern man, in order to achieve a measure of happiness must view the world in a 'standing-alone' way is no great 'chiddush.' The new idea presented in this chapter is that religious institutions should adopt this approach as the central substantive of all religious endeavor. In the past the hand-holding view of reality dominated the beliefs and practices---the myths and symbols of traditional religion. In our modern, free, alone situation, religion can have ongoing relevance if it creates and adopts myths and symbols which reflect the standing alone approach to the world. If liberal Judaism, and Reform Judaism in particular will seek a shared symbolism reflecting the standing alone view of reality---then a viable Jewish future is possible. Though the shape of this Judaism will differ considerably from previous forms of Judaism, yet the purpose of salvation will yet again be served.

Chapter 4
NEW SYMBOLS FOR OLD

A. Introduction

The psychoanalytic symbol indicates change and disruption of equilibrium. A shared symbol not only indicates the change, but objectifies it, makes the change available for large numbers of people to be concerned with. The true shared symbol not only refers to the changed circumstance, but also suggests ways of resolving the anxiety set up by the new situation. Thus, the shared religious symbol both refers to the problem structure of man and suggests ways of resolving this problem situation. The religious symbol points to finitude while providing salvation. A successful symbol is a successful problem-solver.

The definition of symbol and symbolism in use in this thesis is certainly different from other definitions of these concepts. However, as the findings of psychoanalysis are here largely being applied to the religious situation, it is useful to retain these words with their psychoanalytic meanings rather than to utilize these words in their more common meaning.

Can shared symbols be created consciously? There is ample evidence that a shared symbol is often brought consciously into existence. Lloyd Warner's The Living and the Dead gives examples.:

a) Politicians frequently create new shared symbols--- consciously in order to gain popular support.

b) History provides fertile soil for a shared symbolism. While the scientific study of history may focus on all aspects of the past, religious institutions select those aspects of the past which may inspire and edify. As a tool, serving group cohesiveness, the past is 'made present and perfect.' No matter how accurately and 'scientifically' any particular historical event may be reported, the selection of a particular event is determined by feelings of group solidarity, by feelings of wanting to make known to all 'our glorious past'---- so that the group and its leadership may be strengthened.

c) Association groups in any society create and use a variety of shared beliefs and practices.

d) The whole contemporary cult of the dead is full of attempts at creating new symbols---some of the new practices being more effective than others.

Warner cites the example of the caretaker whose role in this cult is crucial.[1]

Also note that Reform Judaism, since the 19th century (see chapter 1) has introduced innovations such as confirmation, consecration, etc. Also of interest is the whole host of new institutions created by Jews to meet their needs---Who before the late 19th century ever heard of a secular state being Jewish?

Thus it seems clear that the conscious creations of new shared symbols has occurred, and therefore can again be at least attempted.

It is worth noting that in this chapter is an expectation, namely, that there is value in <u>speaking</u> about vitally important issues. By talking about aspects of my finitude, I am directed to the central concerns of my life and to ways of finding solutions. Thus the words of a religious ceremony may often be symbolic of my concerns. As for instance, in psychotherapy the individual talks about his conflicts and is thereby assisted to resolution, so it is felt that a series of ceremonies which talk about depth-concerns can have ongoing relevance and value. This, especially if the view of reality of the liturgy coincides with the individual's perception of the world.

Only selected shared symbols are here discussed. With the exception of the discussion of the use of music, the shared practices here dealt with are those which relate to the standing alone theme which has been pursued throughout this thesis.

B. The High Holidays

Upon analysis Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur reveal their structure as the hand-holding response to feelings of Oedipal guilt.[2] The liturgy resounds with words for sin, transgression and guilt:

על חטא שחטאנו לפניך

"For the sin which we have sinned against Thee"

אבינו מלכנו חטאנו לפניך

"Our father our king we have sinned against Thee"

"Openly or in secret" בגלוי /בסתר

"....in the evil meditations of the heart." בהרהור הלב

We are guilty of rebelliousness, of "strength of hand." בתועפת יד

The implications of the Hebrew word תועפת are interesting: He who is strong is by definition evil. Only the weak are good, for they cannot be suspected of rebelling against their father. Of course, all individuals can be said to have had secret thoughts, evil meditations. Therefore, though not as guilty as those who actually rebel, even the weak are evil sinners.

We rebel not only against our Almighty Father, but also against parental figures, "parents and teachers." בגלגל הוריות /מוכיחי

Our confessions end with our beseeching the omnipotent, omniscient, omnibenevolent Father to forgive us. ועל כלם אלוה סליחות

סלח לנו מחל לנו כפר לנו

"For all the sins, O God of forgiveness, bear with us! pardon us! forgive us!" Also we pray: "...pardon our transgression...remove our guilt...and blot out our iniquities, as Thou hast promised..."[3]

One notes the thorough way in which this traditional liturgy handles and resolves the traditional Jew's desires for power and independence.

These desires are evil, man is evil and powerless. God is All-good and All-powerful. Out of his goodness, God cares for man the eternal child and God acts to remove man's heavy burden of guilt.

However, as previously discussed the modern Jew is in need of a standing alone rather than a hand-holding resolution.

Every man experiences feelings of inadequacy, anger and guilt. Below is outlined central ideas which a standing alone view might utilize in the High Holiday liturgy.

1) Negative emotional states (frustration, anger, guilt, hate, etc.) are calls to us to reexamine our lives to see if we are living authentically, true to our highest intentions and noblest inspirations. Are we living our lives in the most meaningful and productive ways possible? Do our negative states arise out of actual external pressures upon us, out of actual deeds that we have or have not performed? Or are our negative states a warning to us that something is wrong, that we are living inauthentically?

2) There is nothing wrong with having negative and violent impulses, as such. But if these impulses are turned into actions which are harmful, violent or destructive---whether these actions be against ourselves or against others---then there is something very definitely wrong, in need of correction.

3) The individual should strive to channel impulses into constructive and productive channels. If an external situation creates these negative feelings surely there are ways to improve the situation. The energy created by the unpleasant situation can be sublimated, in a wide variety of ways.

4) When our negative emotional states arise out of our reactions to parental, authority figures, our choices are not merely between rebellion and submission. We have the right and are able to grow up, become independent, be the equals

of the authority figures, become parents and generally develop our own creative and productive lives.

C. Pesach - the Festival of Freedom

a) Whatever notion of God is being employed, the human achievement of freedom can certainly be more emphasized. Freedom is not achieved except by striving. The exodus from Egypt is of course one of the central Jewish myths (irrespective of whether or not the Bible reports it accurately) and is a clear example of the use of past events as a means to heighten the Jewish identity of the individual and the group.

b) The battle for freedom takes place in the individual. Indeed every fight against oppression and tyranny may be understood in terms of a replay of the struggles for freedom, for independence from parental authority figures which are part of the growing-up process and hence are part of the unconscious background of every individual. Thus, significance could accrue to Pesach if it dealt with this individual struggle for freedom more directly and with the standing alone viewpoint. The fight for freedom is indeed the struggle to achieve a meaningful adult life, and as such is to be encouraged for only through independent adulthood can the individual achieve a measure of salvation.

I quote an original 'prayer' written for the ירושלים של זהב rubric of the old liturgy---a rubric which, in its traditional form, relates freedom from bondage to (the hand-holding) redemption. As this short selection shows, it is possible to reinterpret these concepts in the standing alone manner. What is here done in one prayer must also be done in the Haggada.

> As he searches for meaning and purpose in life, as he meets the challenges of his existence, the Jew creates Torah. We had to leave the slavery of Egypt before we could achieve Torah. Only in the movement from servitude to freedom could we fulfill its

promise. But slavery is not only a fact of our past. It is an ever-present temptation, Egypt a perennial crisis. For as we close our minds, ignoring that which we find disturbing, and tying ourselves to habit-the fear of freedom lies deep within us. Even as our people outgrew its infancy, we strive to lessen our dependency. Ours is the responsibility to unfetter the mind. Into every man is built the possibility of standing on his own feet. As we move forward to shape our own destinies, we shall find peace, we shall again produce Torah. We give praise to the Source which brings us from childhood to creative maturity, from dependency to fulfillment.

D. Shavuot

In traditional Orthodox Judaism Shavuot was the celebration of revelation. In line with the scientific biblical studies the Bible is now viewed by modern men as being the creation of men, however inspired. From the notion of either a dynamic or a natural revelation, follows our right to innovate, and to make our own religious decisions. Shavuot could well become the occasion when we celebrate our existence as members of liberal Jewish institutions. Shavuot has become the occasion of confirmation, one of the first innovations of the Reform movement. Though this particular ceremony is in urgent need of overhaul, it stands as one of the first creations of a movement which was committed from the beginning to opening new paths of religious expression.

Torah, viewed as the creation of men seeking meaning in their lives (whatever the source of their inspiration), is an ongoing process as long as there are Jews who are committed to the search for meaning and authenticity in their existence. Shavuot in liberal Judaism might well celebrate modern Torah, modern writings which can be valuable for a heightened sense of meaningfulness in the life of the Jew today. Innovation could be especially encouraged as part of the Shavuot celebrations. The confirmation of the teenagers could well form part of this total picture---they could be

encouraged to utilize their freedom in new and creative ways. The forms which their creations could take might well vary from group attempts at creating their own confirmation liturgy to individually chosen work-projects, etc. The key point to be emphasized is that it is not enough merely to accept the Torah of their ancestors. Past achievements may be for them an inspiration, but they must 'do their own thing.' (See the selections from Buber quoted in the previous chapter.) In confirmation, each youth is confirmed in his right of religious decision and is challenged to make use of his rights.

E. Sukkot

At present Sukkot celebrations are virtually non-existent on any large basis. The festival is largely dead, for to modern urban Jews the agricultural celebration is void of relevance. They know nothing about agricultural life and care even less.

A less inhibited group of Jews might focus on the sexual symbolism of this festival of fertility---but this will probably have to wait till Jews and society in general are less sexually repressed. Meanwhile, if the festival is to be maintained at all it could become a festival of creation and achievement, recalling the individual's past successes and looking forward to the future. Fertility can be applied not only to the body but also to the human mind.

Related to this oould be the theme of man's increasing mastery over Nature and his ability to turn the potential of the ground and soil of his planet into the means to eliminate hunger and bring physical security to all. Also related could be the theme that man, the master of so much of Nature, has a responsibility not to abuse this mastery.

F. Celebrations surrounding a new birth

While circumcision is today accepted as not being harmful (and might even be beneficial) when performed by a qualified physician, a public circumcision has become questionable for a number of reasons. 1) The public ceremony has been described as a spectacle where adults gather around while the baby bleeds and is in pain. 2) Women are generally excluded from the ceremony. Also there is no equivalent ceremony for girls. In this as in other Jewish ceremonies (even in contemporary liberal Judaism) the status of women remains inferior to that of men. 3) The circumcision is a 'Bris.' The traditional notion of covenant here in use is objectionable, because it implies that there was an infallible revelation in the Jewish past (Sinai), as a result of which Israel is bound in a covenantal relationship with God and consequently must obey God's commandments. But in a Judaism which lacks a certain revelation from the past, there can be no commandment, rather there is choice. The individual chooses to have his son circumcised. As discussed in the section on the High Holidays, traditional Judaism---the hand-holding approach----seemed to favor the weak individual, for a strong person might turn out to be a rebel. Considering the emphasis which is placed upon the public operation, it has been held that the circumcision is a symbolic castration.

Considering these criticisms and considering the fact that there is much value in having some ceremony at this crucial time of new life, and of change in the lives of the parents, some alternatives to the traditional 'Bris' are called for. a) A modified bris is possible, if the parents insist upon the ceremony and the name. In the modified form the operation would be performed by a doctor using clamps to deaden the foreskin, thereby preventing

the public bloodletting spectacle and the pain to the child. b) The alternative is that the operation be privately performed and later at a mutually agreeable time and place, both parents bring the child to be named. c) It is here suggested that the naming ceremony, and not the operation be the focus of the celebrations surrounding the birth of the new child. The naming ceremony used equally for boys or for girls is an occasion implicit with joyous overtones. The liturgy for the naming ceremony might well deal with the following themes.: 1) It is but natural for parents to have certain negative feelings---anxiety, fear, anger, guilt, feelings of insecurity---at the intrusion of this newcomer into their lives, at the trauma of the birth, etc. The liturgy might well deal with the hardships which preceded this happy event, the changes in the lives brought about, etc. 2) Feelings of gratitude are largely present, because the mother and the baby are both (hopefully) in good health and the parents are reunited. 3) The infant seems filled with potential. The parents, relatives and friends rightfully hope for a great future for the child. And what better time could there be for hope? 4) The parents undertake the responsibility of helping the child to grow up from helpless infancy to independent and productive maturity. 5) The official naming of the child establishes the individual identity, something very precious which must be nurtured into creative, productive fulfillment. 6) The public naming of the child welcomes him into the community of Israel. Unless he by some conscious act surrenders his Jewish identity, he will remain a Jew throughout his life. This fact provides him with additional potential for meaningful and fulfilled existence (salvation), because the common identity, the shared problems and the shared symbolism can be of immeasurable aid to him in his struggles through life.

G. The conversion ceremony for Reform Jews specifically

This ceremony is related to the naming ceremony in that a newcomer is welcomed into the Jewish community. Focussing specifically on the Reform Jewish situation, the essential prerequisite of membership is the awareness and acceptance of the individual's right to make his own religious decisions, indeed, the necessity of his making his own choices---if he is to find authenticity in his existence. Beyond these substantives there may be differing opinions as to what other prerequisites are required by local rabbis and congregations---the 'minhag hamakom'---before the conversion ceremony is performed. But the essential element, deserving of emphasis, is that whatever choices of action and belief he makes, his identity as a Jew in a free religious setting is affirmed. He has the right to call himself 'Jew,' and to be a member of the Reform Jewish Community as long as he does not try to create a new Orthodoxy within Reform. Prior to the ceremony it is possible for local demands to be made on the prospective converts, (realizing that these are local demands meeting local needs and interests). 1) It is surely clear that the rabbi or other individual who performs the ceremony should discuss with the convert the facts of his freedom and the necessity of making religious choices---the challenges and responsibilities of his freedom. 2) Of great value to any convert would surely be a course in some of the great religious themes: Death, God, Ethics, etc. In practice the individual could thus be confronted with both the necessity of his making choices and the fact that there are options open to him which can bring fulfillment to his existence. 3) Some might ask prospective converts to have some familiarity with the Jewish past in all its variety, emphasizing that Judaism has been different things for different people at different times.

4) Some might ask for a familiarity with the existing shared symbols of Reform Judaism---thereby heightening the individual's sense of belonging to a community of Jews with a shared outlook and shared concerns. The ceremony itself should also take into account the central fact of the individual's right to free choice. In a Reform Jewish situation, where the individual has this right, there does not exist the right to demand a statement of belief from either members, prospective members or converts. The individual's right to free thought is confirmed in all ceremonies. The conversion ceremony cannot be an exception. It should be restricted to an agreement by the convert to abide by the essential principles of Reform Judaism, his acceptance of the ideals and hopes of the Jewish religious community which he now is joining as his own, and the reassurances and affirmations made to the convert: that he is a Jew, a member of the Reform Jewish Community, and that the propriety of his beliefs and actions are affirmed together with the similar propriety accorded to all Reform Jews who do not seek to impose or compel beliefs or actions upon others. A statement to this effect could be signed and countersigned by the convert and rabbi respectively.

H. The growing-up ceremonies - The consecration of the young child

The occasion of the young child's entering school is an important one for it is a milestone in his progress from dependency to maturity. The ceremony might well encourage the child's increasing independence, his need for more self-reliance and for ongoing parental love and support. Parental responsibility in this area needs emphasis. Also the ceremony might deal with the change in the life of the parents. For, as the child's going to school signifies, he is now able to and must begin to leave home more, learn

more from others, and increasingly find happiness on his own or with people not part of his immediate family circle. This circumstance, though it is to be welcomed, may also occasion feelings of anxiety and hostility which the consecration ceremony might well address itself to. In every way the child's step away from familial dependence is to be encouraged, while the parent's anxieties should lessened. The fact that the child's increasing independence is an ethical desideratum, receiving the support of all concerned may well be a source of strength to the parents.

Bar and Bat Mitzvah

1) If there are no mitzvot, no certain, divinely revealed commandments (this being the original usage of the term)[6], then the idea of being legally culpable according to Jewish law has to fall by the wayside. Thus, the boy is clearly no 'Jewish adult.' 2) Where the Bar mitzvah ceremony is retained it seems obvious that we have no right to discriminate against women. Thus, Bat mitzvah should be at least as widespread as Bar mitzvah. People, however, do not always do the obvious. 3) The ceremony marks a further step on the way to physical, emotional and intellectual maturity. It should not be treated as the end of the road. It is rather a beginning. 4) Ambivalences in the outlook of both parents and child are well worth attention and attempted resolution, in favor of the standing alone 'weltanschauung.' 5) As the child's approach to puberty affects the entire family, the celebration is clearly a family event. As such, it may be public or private (much like a wedding or a naming ceremony). By definition a ceremony addressed to the role of a growing youngster and his (her) role in the family is of relevance to the lives and concerns of all family members.

Confirmation and Graduation

These ceremonies, coming after a course of study, could well enable the teenagers to 'create modern Torah.' Here are various possibilities: The confirmands and graduates might write the service, or parts thereof, might deliver sermonettes, or prepare a booklet of thoughts from their class to the religious school, to the Temple, etc. In such a booklet they might address themselves to the perennial Jewish and religious themes. Alternatively, the youngsters might set for themselves some project whereby they might contribute to the bettering, the happiness of others. The youngsters are increasingly leaving their childhood behind them and are broadening their horizons. Continually they should be encouraged to experiment with different answers to problems confronting them. If the institutions allowed the youngsters much leeway for innovation and creativity, the lives of the younsters would be enriched. The institutions would be strengthened. The Jewish cause would benefit.

I. Funerals

The role of funerals has to be carefully rethought. In line with the concern in this chapter of examining ways in which the standing alone view of reality might be introduced into the shared symbolism of the liberal Jewish community, the wider issues of life and death are not here fully explored. Few modern Jews believe in either physical or spiritual resurrection, or in immortality. Though individuals may subjectively hold such beliefs, they have been largely discredited because of lack of convincing evidence in an age that regularly demands evidence for belief. Many people, to the extent that they have considered their own death, expect no continuation of life.

"When I die, that's it for me," is a prevalent attitude. The death of another person is a frightening event, for it reminds the individual how finite and limited he is and that death may come at any time. Similarly, one death points to the likelihood of other people, dear ones, dying and leaving the individual with feelings of aloneness, insecurity and helplessness. Thus the funeral calls for the reaffirmation of the individual's fundamental beliefs. In modern Jews this increasingly means the affirmation of the standing alone approach to life. We feel shock, sorrow, grief, anger, guilt, loneliness, anxiety, fear, depression---all the negative states, but we accept reality. And in reaffirming our view of the world we look to the possibility of new creation and productivity. Because of this death our lives will be different. But, if we face and understand our emotions, our life will once again reach moments of fulfillment. Death is always present, but salvation and moments of Shabbat[7] are possible.

J. Application of the standing alone approach to the educational curriculum

The educational curriculum for children and adults is in need of major revision. The facts of uncertainty and aloneness are, by and large, ignored while history and the study of traditional elements are the central foci of the curriculum. The individual and his concerns are usually subordinated to concerns of the 'Jewish people,' the 'Jewish civilization' or the demands of 'Judaism' (which term is taken as being equivalent to Orthodox Judaism, for no alternative definition of the term is offered). A mere increase in the number of hours in tuition, such as in a Jewish day school (which institution might well be of value), does not heighten the relevance of the material being taught. It is here suggested that the Reform Jewish

religious school, whatever the quantity of hours, strive to be salvation-oriented, rather than primarily tradition-, history- or people-oriented.

The history of the Jewish past has relevance to the individual only when related to his fundamental human concerns.

Suggested outline for curriculum -- obviously the briefest of outlines: School's aims: 1) Help individuals to handle their finitude by helping them to adopt the standing alone view of reality. 2) Provide individuals with a sense of identity with other Jews past and present. Of great value in this area may be shared symbols and myths: ceremonies, rituals, days, texts, history, and "Jewish geography." Student's aims: 1) How can I grow up and become an adult in our modern world? -- Perhaps religious school can give me answers. 2) I am "Jewish" -- what does that mean in my life? 3) I am a "Reform Jew" -- what does that mean for me?

Before a curriculum is written, a careful study should be made of such questions as: what are the problems which these students are likely to have? -- A knowledge of developmental child psychology is essential. Can the religious school help them to face these problems and solve them? Can the religious school thereby present to the children paradigms of how ancient and contemporary adults would react to similar situations? Can the religious school help the youngsters to become a little more independent and creative and a little more confident about handling future problems? The answer to these questions should be "yes," if the approach of this thesis is followed.

At the key periods of development the child's needs should be the focus -- and any available paradigmatic example from the Jewish past or any other available source could be utilized to encourage the "standing alone" response.

The young child can, in particular, learn much about himself and his Jewish identity through the various symbols. The rethought rituals, ceremonies and festivals (as partially discussed above) can all be of immense value as shared symbols appealing to all parts of his being (emotions, will and intellect). It is not necessary to deal with the psychological rationale in order for the shared symbols to have value. The study of certain selective parts of Jewish history can help to emphasize the positive trends desired, and can deepen the meaning of "Jew" -- i.e. Jewish history in the religious school is a symbol or a myth, not a substantive or an element of Judaism which is of essential importance in the religious school. Jewish history has served and can still serve to bolster contemporary viewpoints, and to strengthen the individual's sense of Jewish identity. It is important that the portions of history being dealt with are accurately presented for it is of vital importance that the child does not later on reject what he has already learned. Jewish history is thus used as a means to help the Jewish child advance further towards healthy and mature adulthood.

The study of certain select texts from our Jewish past can also be attempted. What is essential here is that these texts be recognized as containing human error, and as representing a certain stage in Jewish development. The pupils should be invited to participate in a scientific study of these texts. Possibly attempts might be made to relive certain experiences. Always the thinking of the youngsters should be encouraged: Did X or Y really happen like this? If they had been in David's shoes would they have behaved like he did -- why, why not? Older students might study some texts as literature -- but always the individual's right to hold to his own beliefs should be respected and encouraged, for only thereby can he really learn to stand alone.

Older students can study such themes as God, death, ethical behavior, sexual behavior, faith, religion, Reform Judaism, etc. And each can be encouraged to think out for himself his position on these topics. Thus the freedom to choose would be his, while simultaneously the standing alone view of the world would be encouraged. The older the youngsters get, the more creativity should be sought from them. Thus they could be encouraged in the view that Torah was created in the past, is now being created and can be increasingly created in the future -- that Torah is what the Jew creates when faced with his life's problems.

Adult education classes could deal with adult problems, e.g. how to bring up children, and with the basic problems of finitude, the primary themes of religion. Certainly, in some areas the aid of professional psychiatrists, psychologists, sociologists, etc., might well be sought.

In these ways the religious educational experiences of liberal Jews could be heightened and indeed made of central importance to their lives. A radical restructuring of our religious thinking is required from the hand holding to the standing alone view of the world. But we can do it yet -- and thereby provide ongoing relevance for the word "Jew." It is worth emphasis that the past has relevance for the Jew only insofar as it relates to his fundamental concerns, i.e. Our traditions and our history -- are <u>symbols</u> in the life of the everyday Jew, myths helping him live the fulfilled existence which is substantive. The scientific study of Jewish history is of course, a pursuit independent of this symbolic use of history which heightens the individual's sense of uniqueness. The scientific study of Jewish history starts with data to which it applies a method and achieves

certain results. To the adult Jew, and sometimes to the teenager the scientific study of the Jewish past has much interest -- but this is so largely only when the earlier teachings have instilled in the Jew a strong sense of his relationship to other Jews, and he finds his life to be authentic. Thus, the study of symbols is the first step -- in time the more mature mind can study the reality. Finally the study of various contemporary Jewries, in Israel and elsewhere can also heighten the Jew's sense of identity -- especially when these other Jews are studied in the context of problems which they have, related to problems that we face -- how they react and how we would react. Shared concerns combined with shared memories all can serve to heighten the sense of Jewish identity which we share. Throughout our Jewish education -- it is of central importance that we recognize that our contemporary problems need solution today or tomorrow. Past solutions are all too frequently inadequate. Any knowledge, any action, from the Jewish past, the Jewish present or the general world of today -- all such elements can be utilized in the achieving of a greater degree of salvation among Jews. for this is our aim.

K. The use of music

There is nothing intrinsically "Jewish" about music, as there is nothing intrinsically Jewish about any element in 'Judaism.' But music can be an effective tool for salvation purposes. Though this particular symbol is not integrally related to the standing alone response to finitude as such -- yet a short review of the possibilities may be helpful.

Music is often said to heighten the emotions, to be a mode of expression for one's feelings. Yet to the musician, especially to the

composer, any given piece of music is an intellectual effort, demanding a mastery of a wide variety of skills and a high degree of craftsmanship. In utilizing music for any occasion these factors should be borne in mind, for good music is pleasing not only to the emotions but also satisfying to the mind -- though the musically untrained person may be unaware of why he feels satisfied.

A distinction must be made between "art for art's sake" and "gebrauchsmusiek" (to use these phrases in a loose sense). If the aim of a worship experience is to help the individual to feel "whole," to achieve ments of salvation -- then music must play its part subservient to this substantive. A musician who is involved in the music of any given religious occasion has to see himself as functioning within a total context -- and not as an independent artist. Few music directors or cantors seem to appreciate this point -- for they often seem to make the performance of their music their primary goal, rather than seeing themselves as contributors to a total experience. Professional performances are indeed valuable -- but the role of such performances within a worship experience must be trimmed to the demands of the occasion...From the religionist's viewpoint music is valuable as an aid to salvation purposes, it is not viewed as being substantive or essential.

Because of its emotional appeal, certain statements can be sung and can be found satisfying, which if these statements were said would be rejected as nonesense or as being offensive. It is thus possible to utilize songs from the past -- though their exact content may no longer be believed -- and

these songs will be found to enhance the service because of the emotions that the music evokes. However the practice of singing what is not believed is not likely to have long term success. It succeeds best when the songs are sung in Hebrew (for an English speaking congregation) and thus can be metaphorically, rather than literally, understood.

With salvation being the aim of the service, the music can be divided into three main categories: active participation music, performance music, background music. 1) Active participation music is that variety where congregants feel that because the melody line is simple, and the rhythm is infectious, they both want to and are invited to participate. Thus they hum, sing or rhythically follow the music. By its very nature this variety of music is relatively informal and unsophisticated and often includes folk music. It is necessary that whoever leads the congregation in such singing should be able to be informal: the polished resonance of a trained voice may often make congregants stop singing and want to listen. Therefore if participation is desired -- and it should surely be an element in every service -- then musical artistry as such must be played down, must become subservient to the total artistry of the service, at least for this section of any given service. 2) Performance music: This variety of music is largely inspirational and meditative in character. There are perhaps two main varieties of performance music: (a) Solo and choral work, (b) Taped music. (a) Solo and choral work: This is music where the congregation is asked to sit back and listen and meditate. In such music there is no substitute for musical craftsmanship and efficiency. In the world where phonograph and tape-recorder shape our standards this music must be a polished performance

to be satisfying. There is a wide variety of music available for such performers: traditional songs, chazanut, modern Hebrew and Israeli songs, general music which can be adapted for synagogue purposes.

b) Taped music: Here, previous performances are used in the service for inspirational or other purposes. The congregation is asked to listen, and it is expected that this will be worth the congregation's while. Sometimes choral music can be so taped, sometimes instrumental music. One of the most effective recent innovations has been the judicious use of electronic music which by its non-directive character is often conducive to private meditation. Because of the absence of visual contact with the performers, taped musical selections should of necessity be of short duration.

3) Background music is usually instrumental, vocal or electronic music, 'live' or taped, played as a background to worship material in the service. If the music is at all familiar amongst congregants -- care should be taken that the emotional overtones evoked by the music do not clash with the overtones of the material being read. For this reason electronic or more "abstract" instrumental music is very useful as background in the service.

By making a selective combination of these three categories, music can be a highly effective aid to the purposes of the religious services for modern Jews.

Chapter 5

A CRITIQUE OF THE THINKING OF MORDECAI M. KAPLAN

A. Introduction

Much of scientific and philosophic advance has occurred because one thinker or researcher differed with the work of his predecessors. Critiques serve to show both the degree of similarity of thought, and the degree of difference. The former is primarily important for historians and scholars. The latter is important for progress and advance. It is hoped that the critique of the thinking of Mordecai M. Kaplan will serve the progress of liberal Judaism. It is my general opinion that unless there are considerable and radical changes in the structure and practices of modern Judaism---there will be no Judaism of any kind in the future.

Kaplan is one of the most influential Jewish thinkers of the 20th century. From the 1920's on he has been at the forefront of creative Jewish thought. His naturalistic view of the universe and his non-supernaturalistic interpretation of tradition have been of immeasurable value to large numbers of Jews fleeing their inherited beliefs while being reluctant to surrender their 'Jewishness.' His writings and teachings have brought about the Reconstructionist movement in liberal Judaism. The vibrancy of this movement is illustrated by the recent creation of the Reconstructionist seminary in Philadelphia. Thus the critique which is the substance of this chapter is an evaluation of a still vibrant force on the contemporary Jewish scene.

The body of Kaplan's published works is substantial. As is evident from the material, and as he himself admits,[1] his thinking has remained

eseentially unchanged in the last fifty years. Thus the various writings will be treated as a unit. Certain key concepts from these collected writings will be studied and will then be evaluated. Differences of opinion within Kaplan's writings will be noted and discussed. No attempt will be made to explain the reason for these inconsistencies (obviously some are to be understood as the result of Kaplan's rethinking his position over the years). Rather the focus of the discussion will be on the various implications growing out of these different statements.

This chapter will proceed to discuss the following topics dealt with by Kaplan: Authority; Naturalism; Judaism as a civilization and Jewish practices, Sancta.

B. Mordecai Kaplan on Authority in modern Judaism

Whatever Kaplan's mode of ritual behavior, his thinking is that of a modern man. "Tradition must not be a source of authority, imposing restrictions on the creativity of later generations, but a source of wisdom and morale awakening new creative powers."[2] (All underlined words in the sections quoted are italicized in the original writings.) "If Judaism is henceforth to be based on the principle of democracy, it should accept religious diversity as a normal expression of human life...."[3] "No civilization can afford to become a final and closed system of life. Continuous progress must henceforth be its ruling principle. The realities of the environment and the cultural climate must always be reckoned with. Though this does not preclude the formulation of detailed philosophies and specific lines of conduct, it does preclude their finality, however perfect they may seem at the time of formulation."[4] "Judaism as a civilization

allows for a variety of beliefs and practices; what it requires of each Jew is that he should want to be a Jew, should consider the Jewish people, their problems his problems, their life his life."[5] "We must...base Jewish religion of tomorrow not on what our ancestors have told of their experience with God, but on our own experience with God."[6]

God and Judaism as a civilization will be discussed later. What emerges from Kaplan's writings is that the individual is not bound by the past, that tradition lacks the authority to command modern man, that the Jew must determine his own beliefs and actions. Kaplan is a liberal Jew. His non-traditional views 'earned' him his Orthodox Jewish excommunication. Thus far, Kaplan's view of authority is close to that discussed in chapter 2.

However, Kaplan was not consistent. If past authority was undermined, he still believed that authority of some kind was possible and desirable. "...The Orthodox managed to retain at least a token of rabbinic authority. But the Reformists accepted, on principle, the dissolution of that authority. The very existence, however, of a collective entity like a community or a people is inconceivable without some degree of social structure, authority and discipline....Had the Reformists been aware that what they really needed was to create some new instruments of authority, they might really have given Judaism a new least on life....The fear of establishing genuinely binding authority was evident..." (Kaplan mentions the various German conferences and synods of 1837, 1844, 1845, 1846, 1859, and 1871.)[7]

Kaplan desires the existence of Jewish law and suggests two kinds of laws for the Jewish community. None of these laws result from an infallible revelation. All are human creations which may be of value to Jews. The first

variety of Jewish law here suggested is where a body of experts on the Jewish past and on contemporary human needs should draw up a guide of ritual practice which might in time become authoritative.[8] Obviously any authority which such a guide would have could only be conditional. If individuals decided to follow such a guide, the likely reason would be that such a guide is useful. If significant leaders of modern Jewish thinking make statements, such statements are certainly worth considering. However, when these statements are followed by action on a large scale, the reason is not that we follow the law suggested by X. Rather, we act because we find the statements made to be valuable and helpful. Thus the status of a guide such as Kaplan suggests cannot be that of law, which has an element of compulsion; rather its status is that of advice given by one group of individuals to another group of individuals. Compulsion is lacking, but the guide may be followed because it meets certain needs.

Kaplan's other usage of 'law' is sociological, the 'social habits' of a group. These are modes of behavior governed by rules of conduct which the group creates and enforces upon itself. The Torah is cited as having been law in this sense, including social etiquette, moral standards, civil and criminal law, and religious teachings and practices.[9]

That every group has its own set of rules is certain. It is also clear that every group enforces its rules by means of social sanctions. That the rules of conduct set up in traditional Judaism helped the traditional Jew to live his Judaism throughout his life is likewise known. But, on the one hand, while the Pentateuch may once have reflected the 'social habits' of our forefathers in nomadic or rural tribes, it hardly reflects the social habits of the contemporary urban man. On the other hand Kaplan's assumption

of a united people, which like a nation has its own norms and ways of handling socially difficult situations, is questionable, at least in the contemporary situation. Where Jews spend most of their time in contact with other Jews, the feeling of being a close people is reinforced, for indeed all social interactions then occur between members of the Jewish 'people.' But where Jews live in a secular society with many groups and subgroups all of which have their own norms of behavior, all of which apply equally to Jew or non-Jew and where the membership is always voluntary---there being little contact between various members which might be a basis for applying social sanctions against others who live differently---the idea of a Jewish people with its own developing social habits is not reflected in reality. Instead, each Jewish group in practice formulates its own rules of conduct, for the small area within the life of the individuals whose lives it affects. Jews living in Eastern Europe and elsewhere till the modern era were separated in their living from the 'goyyim,' their social habits reflected the fact that they were indeed a group apart. The feeling of distinct peoplehood, with a different way of daily life had a clear basis in reality. Today, when our lives are fragmented by concerns and demands which have no relationship to groups of Jews, there cannot be the same sense of peoplehood, of peoplehood, of unity of thought and deed. Instead, to a large extent, each society formulates its own laws and norms, each subgroup its own standards and etiquette. All vary according to time, place, the economic and political framework, etc. Diversity is everywhere present and the existence of any single Torah spelling out social etiquette, moral standards, civil and criminal law, religious teachings and practices is highly unlikely in our

mobile and ever-changing society. Instead what occurs is that every time a group of individuals form a group, they determine their own rules for social interaction. Without the unity of a sociologically distinct people there exists no way for a new Torah to accurately reflect the social habits of Jews, there exists no mechanism to enforce obedience to such a Torah and as Kaplan has hinted (and as was discussed in chapter 2) there does not exist the authority, the right to attempt such enforcement. Our Jewish situation is radically different from any previous Jewish situation. Authority is not possible, Jewish law (other than on a small-group basis) is no longer able to be evolved, the existence of a sociologically separate people is not factually evident---except of course in the State of Israel, where the situation is somewhat different.

Without authority, law or the old sense of peoplehood, the shape of a modern Judaism must differ considerably from that of any previous Judaism. With the lack of factual basis for 'peoplehood' in the old sense, Kaplan's concept of the Jewish civilization must also be suspect.

C. Kaplan's Naturalistic views

Kaplan adopts a naturalist position to law (as mentioned above). In a similar way he viewedall of the Jewish heritage as being a human creation. The tradition "has to be viewed as both the stimulus and the product of the people's will to live and to render its life worthwhile."[10]

On religion his view is likewise a naturalist one. "Without the scientific understanding of religion, it is impossible for anyone to have a correct idea of what is happening to religion today."[11] "Religion is no more committed to theocentrism than astronomy is to geocentrism...Were religion irrevocably committed to the belief in miracles and to the blind acceptance of the authority of the past, its days would be numbered."[12] "The essence

of a religion is the effort to discover what makes life worthwhile, and to bring life into conformity with those laws on which the achievement of a worthwhile life depends. A religion is thus a social institution, a product of man's social life, of his efforts to achieve his salvation through whatever tribe, nation, people or church to which he belongs."[13] To one reared in the thinking of today, with the preconceptions of contemporary science, these statements are easy to agree with. Kaplan is obviously influenced by scientific thinking. Especially important to him are the writings of Royce and of the Durkheim school of sociology.[14] Then, he sometimes seems to have been influenced by Jung's motion of a collective unconscious mind.[15] Obviously, an individual with a psychoanalytic, 'broad' empirical[16] orientation will find fault with this thinking. Similarly, one trained in the philosophical attempts to find significant referents for the word 'God' will find Kaplan's God concept ('the power that makes for salvation')[17] to be unsatisfactory. However, it is not the intention of this chapter to criticize the exact nature of Kaplan's naturalism. It is rather intended to criticize his conception of Judaism and his notion of what Jews should be striving for. Therefore these points are noted but not dwelt upon.

D. Judaism as a civilization

"The Reformers say....in our day Judaism must cease to be a civilization, and must, become only a religion. According to the version of Judaism presented here, Judaism must contine to be a civilization."[18]

Till Kaplan suggested this notion, no important Jewish thinker argued that Judaism was primarily a civilization. Nationality, peoplehood, race, religion had all been posited for the word Judaism. In specifying that Judaism was in essence a religion, the early Reformers were saying

nothing that their contemporary Orthodox colleagues did not also adhere to (at least in Western Europe). In saying that Judaism is a civilization, Kaplan has radically redefined Judaism. Kaplan has thereby created new rules for what is 'Jewish,' it is now a completely new 'ballgame.' This redefinition is one of the possibilities inherent to a free Jewish situation.

"The recognition of Judaism as a civilization would remove once and for all a veritable host of false assumptions and distorted notions concerning it. Judaism would then figure in the consciousness of the Jew as the ensemble of all that is generally included in a civilization. It would elicit from him a sense of spiritual rootedness in Eretz Yisrael, a feeling of oneness with the 40 century old People of Israel, a desire to understand its language and literature, a yearning to cherish its aspirations, and an eagerness to live its way of life, with its mores, laws and arts.

If Jews would try to cope, in this spirit, with their inner and outer problems, they would bring to bear creative intelligence upon whatever task they would undertake, whether it be that of enhancing the State of Israel, of combating anti-semitism, organizing communal life, promoting Jewish education, establishing congregations, fostering beneficent religion, improving moral standards or encouraging Jewish art. Jews would then no longer content themselves with half-thoughts and compromises which are responsible for the present chaos and demoralization in Jewish life. Their hearts would then be set upon so revitalizing their social heritage, so reconstructing their way of life, and so conditioning their future, that the Jewish People would become a source of spiritual self-realization to the individual Jew, and of marked influence for universal freedom, justice and peace.

If Judaism is to become creative once again, it will have to assimilate the best in contemporary civilization. In the past, this process of assimilating cultural elements from the environment was carried on unawares. Henceforth, that process will have to be carried on in deliberate and planned fashion. In that respect, Judaism will, no doubt, have to depart from its own tradition. That is inevitable, since conscious and purposeful planning is coming to be part of the very life-process of society. No civilization, culture, economy or religion that is content to drift aimlessly has the slightest chance of surviving. It is in the spirit, therefore, of adopting the best in other civilizations and cooperating with them, and not in the spirit of yielding to their superior force or prestige, that Judaism should enter upon what will constitute the next stage in its evolution."[19]

Kaplan asks what makes Judaism a civilization. In his reply he lists a land; a language (A'A people that speaks is not dead; a people that is not dead, speaks! According to this statement, there is no living Jewish people outside of Israel!);[20] "Social habits" (discussed above); folk traditions and sancta; folk arts; and social structure.[21]

With regard to sancta Kaplan comments, "It is apparent that the sancta of a group help to make the members of that group conscious of their kinship to one another; they weld the group together, and hence constitute one of the most important features of a civilization.

We are now in a position to understand the meaning of religion. The traditions of a group which center about the idea of God, and the observance of those traditions constitute the religion of that group. Even those traditions which do not center around the idea of God have, to a large extent, the same significance in the life of a group as those traditions which do, and function as religion does.

Judaism has many sancta: events, like the Exodus from Egypt; places, like Jerusalem; objects like the Torah; heroes like Moses, the Prophets, and the Rabbis. In Judaism, the sancta have the same function that they have in other civilizations....What is necessary to emphasize...is that, first, Judaism may be regarded as a civilization because, in addition to other reasons, the Jewish people possesses these sancta. Secondly, the sancta of Judaism have all been religious (Is this not the same as saying that Jewish sancta are sancta?), rendering the Jewish civilization unique; and third, that sancta must play a vital role in the reconstruction of Judaism for the future."[22]

Kaplan's notion of Judaism is certainly of interest, and of value to Jews who, having been brought up in a traditional home, reject the beliefs of this tradition but find emotional and sentimental value in the tradition. He has not addressed himself to the situation of individuals who are Jewish, but have no knowledge of the tradition. Consequently it has little positive emotional value for them. Thus this variety of Jew, in increasing numbers knows nothing of a Jewish civilization and of Jewish sancta. He finds himself a 'Jew,' but this name is void of meaning for him, because if it does not demand his assent to traditional beliefs, it demands his participation in a civilization dominated by tradition. In the pressure of modern life he has time for little more than lip-service to this civilization. The modern Jew increasingly has neither the time nor the energy to devote to causes that are not of central concern to him. The concept of loyalty is largely unknown to the modern Jew. With the decline of nationalism and the rise of subjective anxiety (the objective sources of anxiety having largely

been conquered by modern science and technology), the first loyalty of the individual is to himself. While Kaplan has used his freedom to define Judaism in naturalistic terms, i.e. a civilization, he has not addressed himself to the dilemma of the modern Jew who knows nothing of the past and who seeks a meaningful existence. Kaplan uses a broad convas, forgetting that the individual Jew's existence is lived on a much smaller scale.

Kaplan's definition of religion is of interest, sociologically. But, it is a broad, superficial statement ignoring the individual and emphasizing the traditions of the group. He has not addressed himself to the anxieties, the need for salvation of contemporary man whose involvement with any group is minimal. He has not filled the word 'Jew' with individual meaning, as Reines has with his notion of 'Jew' as an ontal symbol.[23]

> "There can be only one possible objective goal on which all Jews, who wish to be identified as such can agree, no matter how widely they diverge in their conception of Judaism: the survival and the enhancement of the Jewish people. The Jewish people is an existential fact, so long as there are enough Jews who wish to remain Jews. With that as the starting point, we are in a position to accept our tradition, which unites us with all past generations of our People, and to have it orient us religiously without our being committed to the belief in the historicity of its miracles and theophanies."[24]

Again we note the broad canvas. It would seem obvious, though overlooked by Kaplan, that the first concern of the Jew is his own individual 'survival' and 'enhancement'----before he has concerns for the cause of the Jewish people. Bent on maintaining membership of organizations, only the Jewish leadership has these broad concerns. It is here held that any Judaism can only survive and be enhanced to the extent that the lives of the Jews concerned are enhanced. A Jew may well wish to remain a Jew without having any notion of tradition, peoplehood, etc. The name 'Jew' precedes whatever content is applied to it. Authority having been discredited, the Jew has

the right, the freedom, to attach the words Jew and Jewish to whatever content he desires. However, attaching these words to 'religion' provides opportunities not only for individual creativity but also for individual salvation. Only if the Jewish concern is not primarily the people but the individual, is Jewish survival, relevant Jewish survival, feasible.[25]

E. Sancta and Symbols

Kaplan's thinking is on occasion confused and sometimes contradictory. On the subject of sancta, he makes a variety of statements.:

> "Early Reform believed that it was possible to separate off religion from the national life. This is impossible. The religion of a group is inextricably bound up with the experience and history of the group. The sancta of a group religion are selected from the national history, and cannot function apart from that history."[26]

This quote is in agreement with his other comments on sancta quoted earlier, to the effect that sancta weld a group together and are a crucial feature of a civilization. From all previous statements it would appear that sancta are irreplaceable elements in the Jewish civilization. Yet a different thought may also be found in Kaplan's writings.:

> "When sancta have become meaningless, they cease, in the nature of the case, to be sancta. But this need not trouble us so long as the people lives and creates, for then it will produce new sancta. To keep a religion vital, religious thought must be free. It is a sad commentary on the intellectual level of religious thought that a free thinker is identified in the popular mind as an atheist."[27]

The implications of this statement are indeed radical. For Kaplan seems to be arguing for a free religion, wherein every element is replaceable. What some Jews see as being of central importance in Judaism may well be rejected by other Jews. The Jewish religion would become fluid in form and open in content. However, this view does not seem to be representative of Kaplan's

thinking. Elsewhere he argues against it.:

> "There are those, of course, who would say: what is the use of retaining any part of the old religion? Why not create an entirely new one? The answer is: there is a momentum, an emotional drive which tradition possesses, and which can be of great value. If the proper method is used, new ideas and ideals gain in power when they emerge out of the ideas and ideals of the past. Jews in former years were real men and women; they experienced very much the same kinds of emotions, conflicts, hopes that Jews do today. There is very much in common, humanly speaking, between any two generations of people. In the experience of many generations, certain general ideas have been evolved which could be of great value to the present. To turn our backs upon the past altogether would be to discard whatever value this vast experience might have. Certainly, some basic truths must have been learned by Jews in the past. If it were possible to get behind the words that they used, the particular language in which they couched these ideas, and the peculiar forms in which they expressed them, we might discover underlying truths that would apply to modern life....If we could study the psychology of our ancestors, we would find beneath all their rites and practices and beliefs certain permanent human strivings."[28]

Kaplan vacillates, but by and large he seems to be not fully aware of the radical changes that have occurred, of the fact that a naturalist religion such as he advocates may out its different nature require non-traditional expression. When he speaks of the emotional drive 'which tradition possesses, and which can be of great value,' he can only be referring to those individuals calling themselves Jews who as a result of upbringing find such value in the traditions. There is no reference here to those Jews to whom traditions are unknown, or to Jews who are unable to relate in any meaningful way to these traditions. That traditions are of great emotional value is certain. However, Kaplan has not properly dealt with what Judaism in particular is to do when increasing numbers of Jews either pay only lip-service to the 'folkways of the people,' finding them to be not directly related to the real concerns of existence----or finding them to be offensive. What if sancta are dead?

Kaplan suggests a careful analysis of the inherited traditions, so as to unfold underlying truths and permanent strivings. Certainly such studies are of value. Shared concerns, shared approaches and shared solutions to life problems may well heighten a shared sense of identity. As I seek truth and meaning in my existence the attempts of my Jewish forebears to find truth and meaning may well be of value to me as examples of what might be done. More importantly, the shared quest for truth and meaning heightens my sense of Jewish identity. But what Kaplan overlooks is that the problems of the Jew are here and now. The past may provide some suggestions for some individuals as to how to enrich life and resolve conflicts, but it does not hold all even most of the ways in which salvation may be found. An authoritarian tradition looks to the past, a free Judaism's first commitment must be to the problems of the present and the hopes for the future. Here the tradition can be little more than a partial aid. Thus the creation of entirely new Jewish religious forms based upon new insights becomes not only likely but desirable.

Another possible criticism is that Kaplan is very imprecise in his use of language. A case in point is his usage of 'sanctum' and 'symbol' to describe the same reality. Occasionally he uses both words in the same context,[29] but at no time does he make a clear distinction between these two terms. By and large what he says about sancta and symbols seem to be interchangeable.

"Jewish religion is Jewish only because of its functioning in and through the Jewish people. In order that it shall be able so to function, Jews must be kept aware of their identification with the Jewish people. Ritual and religious symbolism are the main technique for effecting

"consciousness of kind" among Jews, or what is commonly called Jewish consciousness. Just as the American flag causes all Americans to feel themselves united in a common enterprise, though they live as far removed from one another as New York, and San Francisco, so such symbols as the sefer torah, the mezuzah, the tallit and all the other concrete objects, and rites of Jewish tradition bind the individual Jews to all other Jews who live, have lived or will live, in the consciousness of belonging to Israel, and participating in a common historic civilization, Judaism.

Naturally, it does not follow from such a conception of the function of ritual observance that all observances handed down by tradition are indispensable, or of equal value. Many former observances, such as the practice of animal sacrifice, for example, have become obsolete. Many others will become obsolete, and new observances will come into being. That is what happens in every live civilization. Once we cease taking a legalistic attitude toward observances and regarding a ritual transgression as a sin against God, we shall be under the necessity of determining new criteria with which to evaluate religious rituals. What shall determine which rites and symbols we shall preserve and which we should discard?

The answer is, to exercise our judgement on the basis of spiritual rather than of legalistic considerations. We should not ask ourselves of any ritual observance under question: 'Is it prescribed, and would its neglect be a transgression of a traditional rule?' but rather, 'Has it any power to move to religious thought or action of significance?' 'Does it, or does it not, help to make Jewish life more worthwhile by its effect on our emotions, or by its power to suggest a significant idea?'

In Jewish life and thought, three main concepts have always been related as a sort of trinity, each implying and illuminating the others -- God, Israel and Torah. They may well serve as touchstones in our application of spiritual criteria to Jewish ritual. If a rite or symbol makes us God-conscious, if it makes us aware of contact with the Power that makes for salvation, then surely it is of value and should be retained. If it makes us Israel-conscious if by observing it we are the more disposed to seek Jewish associations and to accept Jewish responsibilities, then again, it has a distinct value for Jewish religion. Finally, if it relates to Torah or religious education, if it stimulates our thinking about life's values, particularly if it helps us appreciate the religious significance of Jewish experience, then again, it is of undeniable value. But a rite that conveys no meaning related to any of these main concepts of Jewish religion deserves to become obsolete, even though it is prescribed in every one of the Jewish codes. And conversely, a religious ritual of value, such for example as that of Bar Mitzvah, or of Confirmation, for which no authorization can be found in any code, should be given a place in our religious tradition. Once we free religious ritual from its bondage to legalism, there are great possibilities for enriching Jewish life with new rituals, rituals that draw on all the arts known to man as media for the expression of significant religious ideas."[30]

From a naturalistic position there can be little criticism of Kaplan's argument against legalism. Kaplan defends Jewish symbols because they are effective techniques for heightening Jewish consciousness, they serve their purposes well. This utilitarian view of symbols is indeed the only one possible in a religious system which is not in its entirely

commanded by God. For Kaplan religious symbols serve the goal of heightening Jewish identity certainly a valuable goal, and indeed essential if Judaism is viewed as being a civilization above all else. However, in a free situation religious symbols may well serve alternative goals, 'symbols' may well be differently defined. For instance if religion is understood as "man's response to finitude" and Judaism is understood as being primarily a religion, then religious symbols will be seen as serving the goal of resolving finitude.

Again, in a free situation, where the past has no binding value on modern Jews, there can be no compulsion to keep God, Israel and Torah as the central criteria for Jewish ritual. These 'may well serve as touchstones,' they must not. If each of these three concepts are found useful, they may well form the basis of contemporary Jewish ritual. If for instance an individual dislikes the word 'God' (because of negative overtones which it has for him) he does not cease to be Jewish. All that can be said is that the symbol 'God' is not valuable to him. The symbols, 'God,' 'Israel' and 'Torah' are indeed valuable and meaningful shared symbols to many Jews. But they are not the only such shared symbols possible. They are, like all words and symbols, replaceable, should they fail to achieve their purposes. In a fallible religious situation, our religious creations are fallible. However, man uses symbols throughout his life. If one set of symbols does not suffice others may be found or created. Thus the future of the Jewish enterprise may well be different from the past. A creative Jewish future is possible, indeed it is desirable.

"Now, an analysis of the ideas associated with the Sabbaths and Festivals of the Jewish year, and expressed in the traditional liturgy and

ritual associated with them, affords the best opportunity for applying this method of approach, since these occasions are sacred alike to every school of Jewish thought, in one form or another. Orthodoxy, Reformism and Conservatism agree in hallowing them. Even secular nationalism, from its own point of view, ascribes importance to them.. They still stir in the heart of the Jew emotions which awaken in him his love for his people and his feeling of identification with them in the pursuit of certain ideal ends. It is through them, therefore that we must seek to arouse the Jewish consciousness to an awareness of itself. They should become the great educational occasions in the Jewish year. They should be dedicated to the clarification and interpretation of the religious values in the Jewish heritage. Only thus will the life of the Jew be enhanced ethically and spiritually. The Sabbaths and Festivals of a people reflect its highest interest and ideals. By celebrating a natural or an historic event, a people directs attention to that phase of the event which to it is of vital import. The Jewish Sabbath and Festivals especially are rich in ideas which reveal the hopes and strivings of the Jewish people. To know those ideas and to be aware of their implications is to know what ends the Jew cherishes.

The effect of reinterpreting the Sabbath and the Festivals of the Jewish calendar in the spirit here suggested will, therefore, be not only to bridge the chasm between the past and the present, but also to span the gulf that separates the two worlds in which the modern Jew lives -- the world of Jewish memories and hopes and the world of his everyday occupations and cares. Such revaluation, if successful in its purpose, should bring healing to the sick soul of the Jewish people now suffering from the morbid state of dual personality. The sound instinct of the Jewish people still regards its

Sabbaths and Festivals as sacred in theory, although in practice they function but feebly and, in many circles, have almost fallen into desuetude. The main reason is the irrelevancy to modern life of the ideas that people commonly associate with these days and of many of the forms of their observance. But the very need for revitalizing the Jewish holidays, a need experienced by almost all Jews to whom Judaism is still dear, may be made to contribute to Jewish revival. The "days of solemn assembly," as the Torah calls them, still have a powerful appeal as media of spiritual instruction, and exert an influence as few other elements do in the life of our people. If, therefore, the Jewish Sabbath and Festivals were to have those latent meanings which have relevance to modern needs made explicit, they would no doubt infuse new health and vigor into the body of Jewish tradition.

Unless we effectively reinterpret these meanings in relevant terms, the obsolescence of the sacred days of the Jewish calendar, the last stronghold of the Jewish religious life in modern times, seems imminent."[31]

Kaplan and the Reconstructionist movement in general have placed much emphasis on reinterpretation of the inherited symbols. In effect this may be described as putting new wine in old bottles. (In this connection Gershom Scholem has an interesting discussion of religious symbolism and authority in the first chapter of his "On the Kabbalah and its Symbolism.")[32] The alternative approach in an authority-less religion would be to put old wine into new bottles. If the search for salvation is recognized as being the common denominator of all significant forms of

Judaism, then this becomes possible. With salvation being viewed as substantive, essential, 'wine,' everything else within Judaism may be seen as being 'bottles,' the forms and symbols whereby the substantive is served. When the bottles break let them be replaced.

Reinterpretation and innovation are the two main alternatives open to liberal Jewish leaders. They are by no means self-exclusive, and are perhaps two sides of the same coin. The former approach has been much used throughout the centuries.[33] The latter approach, of seeking new containers for the wine of Judaism has been less frequently used. Though the notion of a Judaism in the future, where the symbols and forms (whether beliefs or practices) are different from those used by Jews of the past and present, may be frightening to many---yet the attempt must surely be made to create such a Judaism. For where the term 'people' has no reality-referrent for the individual, where the traditions are found to be void of significance for the individual, where the notion of a 'Jewish civilization' receives little more than lip-service----the interpretive approach of a Kaplan is of little avail. The alternatives for a Jew who wishes to make his own religious decisions but who finds little of value in the traditions of the civilization are either to cease calling himself a 'Jew'---the word has become meaningless to him; or to attempt the construction of new meaning for the word. The study of ways whereby such new, relevant content might be attached to the words 'Jew' and 'Judaism' has formed the body of this thesis.

Footnotes -- Chapter 1

1. A. J. Reines, "The Land of Israel and Two Medieval Thinkers," p. 2.

2. Protocolle der ersten Rabbiner-Versammlung, henceforth referred to as Pr. I.

3. Protocolle und Aktenstücke der Zweiten Rabbiner-Versammlung, henceforth referred to as Pr. II.

4. Protokolle der drittem Versammlung deutscher Rabbiner, henceforth referred to as Pr. III.

5. Pr. I, p. 89. In translating the German original I have found the following authors to be helpful: David Philliposn, The Reform Movement in Judaism, W. Gunther Plaut, The Rise of Reform Judaism, Jakob J. Petuchowski, Prayerbook Reform in Europe.

6. Pr. II, p. 27.

7. Pr. II, p. 180 ff.

8. Pr. III, p. 2f.

9. Pr. I, p. xiii.

10. Pr. I, p. 55.

11. Pr. I, p. 65f.

12. Pr. III, p. 86.

13. Pr. II, p. 314.

14. Pr. II, p. 18ff.

15. Pr. II, p. 34ff.

16. Pr. II, p. 54.

17. Pr. II, p. 18ff.

18. Jakob J. Petuchowski, Prayerbook Reform in Europe, p. 381.

19. Pr. II, p. 382.

20. Pr. III, p. 59ff.

21. Pr. II, p. 40f.

22. Pr. I, p. 45f., 103.

23. Pr. II, p. 43ff.

24. Pr. III, p. 209ff.

25. Pr. III, p. 280 ff.

26. Pr. I, p. 99ff.

27. Pr. II, p. 326ff.

28. Pr. III, p. 57f.

29. Heinrich Graetz, History of the Jews, Volume V, p. 683. (Reformers are "staunch imitators of the church and of the 'Friends of the Light.'").

30. Pr. III, p. 263ff.

31. Pr. III, p. 292.

32. A. J. Reines, "Reform Judaism," Elements in a Philosophy of Reform Judaism (henceforth referred to as Elements), p. 12.

Footnotes -- Chapter 2

1. Mishna Sanhedrin, 10:1.

2. For instance K. Kohler, Jewish Theology, p. 284, and M. Friedländer, The Jewish Religion, p. 231.

3. It is necessary at this stage to state my indebtedness to the teaching and writings of Alvin J. Reines. In particular, this chapter is heavily based upon AJR's three essays, "Authority and Reform Judaism," "Polydoxy and Modern Judaism," and "Reform Judaism" which all appear in Elements. On occasion, in this chapter selections from these three essays have been quoted without the use of quotation marks. I have attempted to unify various of Reines' arguments into one coherent argument. While the remainder of the thesis is largely my own thinking, it was Reines who awoke me to religious realities. Hopefully, I shall not return to my "dogmatic slumbers."

4. For literature on these two notions see "Authority" in the Encyclopedia of Philosophy, and The Idea of Freedom. Ed. Mortimer J. Adler.

5. Encyclopedia of Philosophy, vol. 2, pp130-133. The coherence theory: "To test whether a statement is true, is to test if for coherence with a system of statements.

6. Ibid., pp223-232. The correspondence theory: "Truth consists in some form of correspondence between belief and fact." (quoting Russell.)

7. Ibid., vol. 6, pp88-89 (P.F. Strawson) The performative theory: "To say that a statement is true is not to make a statement but to perform the act of agreeing with, accepting or endorsing a statement." When one says "It's true and it's raining," one asserts no more than "It's raining." The function of 'It's true" is to agree with, accept, or endorse the statement that it's raining."

8. Ibid., pp427-430. The pragmatic theory: Charles S. Pierce: "The opinion which is fated to be ultimately agreed to by all who investigate, is what we mean by the truth."
William James: "The true is only the expedient in our way of thinking, just as the right is only the expedient in our way of thinking."
John Dewey: "Truth 'happens to an idea' when it becomes a verified or warranted assertion."

9. See A.J. Reines' "Reform Judaism," Elements, p. 9ff.

10. See Pirkei Avot 1.

11. A list largely compiled from lists in AJR's "Authority and Reform Judaism," p. 2, "Polodoxy and Modern Judaism," pp. 2-3.

12. Alfred Loisy, The Origins of the New Testament, p. 10, quoted in Donald Wells, God, Man and the Thinker, p. 247.

13. Donald Wells, op. cit., p. 247.

14. Loisy, op. cit., 10.

15. Wells, op. cit., p.247.

16. Ibid., p. 247.

17. Ibid., p. 248.

18. Sylvan Schwartzman, Reform Judaism in the Making, p. 115-118. (Pittsburgh Platform planks 2, 3, and 4.)

19. Ibid., pp. 137-138. (Columbus platform planks 1 and 4.)

20. See chapter 1 of this thesis.

Footnotes -- Chapter 3

1. Abraham Cronbach, "A Finalist Manifesto," copy received from Dr. Sheldon H. Blank.

2. I.e., apart from the work of Alvin J. Reines.

3. See in this connection A. Cronbach's Realities of Religion.

4. A. J. Reines, "God and Jewish Theology," Elements, pp. 8-9.

5. See A. J. Reines "Reform Judaism" p9ff.

6. Schwartzman, op. cit., p.120, 6th plank.

7. Ibid., pp.137-138, Plank 1, Columbus platform.

8. Ibid., pp.137-138, Plank 6, Columbus platform.

9. Milton D. Hunnex, Philosophies and Philosophers, p.25.

10. Ibid., p.25-26. The complete list includes fourteen definitions of religion.

11. A. J. Reines, "God and Jewish Theology," op. cit., p.18.

12. A. J. Reines, "Function of Reform Rabbi," Elements, p.3.

13. A. J. Reines, "Land of Israel and Two Medieval Thinkers," p. 1.

14. Ernest Jones, "The Theory of Symbolism," Papers on Psychoanalysis, pp.87-144.

15. Sidney G. Margolin, "Psychoanalysis and Symbols," Symbols and Values: an Initial Study, pp.507-521.

16. Rank and Sachs, "Der Bedeutung der Psychoanalyse Für die Geisteswissenschaften," pp.11, 18.

17. Jones, op. cit., p.90.

18. Margolin, op. cit., p.512.

19. Jones, op. cit., p.96 (from Rank and Sachs)

20. Ibid., p.116.

21. Ibid., p.90.

22. Ibid., p.140, Margolin, op. cit., 513.

23. Jones, op. cit., p.144.

24. Ibid., p.97.

25. See Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary, p.561.

26. Jones, op. cit., p.98.

27. Ibid., p.140.

28. Ibid., p.111.

29. Ibid., pp.133-134.

30. Ibid., pp.98-99, Margolin, op. cit., p.512.

31. Jones, op. cit., p.89.

32. Ibid., p.101, Margolin, op. cit., p.512.

33. Jones, op. cit., p.102.

34. Margolin, op. cit., 520-21.

35. Jones, op. cit., p.128.

36. e.g., In "The Function of the Reform Rabbi," beliefs, ethics, and symbolism are separated; or in "A Common Symbolism for Reform Judaism," Elements, p.1. "The creed of a religion provides reason with beliefs concerning reality, such as the meaning of the word God. The will is taught its limits and direction by a combination of the beliefs and ethical teachings of the religion. And the feelings a person should have regarding ultimate reality or particular events are also determined by the creedal and ethical commitments of his religion, as well as by the conative decisions he has made. The expression of will and feeling in religion takes two primary forms: one, individual and private; the other, social and public. The former consists of the personal and subjective religious actions that a person engages in, the latter refers to practices shared by an entire religious community. Practices shared by an entire community may be called a common symbolism. The common symbolism of Reform Judaism consists of festivals (principally, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkoth, Pesach, Shavuot, and Chanukah); life-cycle ceremonies (such as, birth, marriage, death); and whatever other public rituals there may be (confirmation, and so forth)."

    In this thesis my definition includes creeds, ethical commitments, and practices within the term shared symbolism.

37. Ibid., p. 2.

38. E.g., Hayyim Schauss, Guide to the Jewish Holydays.

39. The sense of this question was posed to me orally at the theological symposium April 9, 1970, by J. J. Petuchowski at Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati, Ohio.

40. See Reines' "A Theology of Jewish survival," Elements.

41. S. Freud, Future of an Illusion, pp. 31-32, 35, 47-8, 52. In the quotes, Freud speaks of illusion rather than projection but the intent is the same.

42. L. Feuerbach in Hartshorne and Reese, Philosophers Speak of God, pp. 448-455.

43. Rollo May, ed., Symbolism in Religion and Literature, p. 23.

44. Ibid., p. 26.

45. Ibid., p. 33.

46. Note May's statement, p. 34: "Symbols are specific acts or figures... myths develop and elaborate these symbols into a story which contains characters and several episodes."

47. Ibid., p. 45.

48. S. Freud, Future of an Illusion, p. 81.

49. Martin Buber, Hasidism and Modern Man, p. 130 ff.

50. On Buber's pantheistic theology see Hartshorne and Reese, Philosophers Speak of God, pp. 302-306.

51. Buber, op. cit., p. 130ff.

Footnotes -- Chapter 4

1. Lloyd Warner, The Living and the Dead.

2. Union Prayerbook, Part II, pp. 224-7, and Machzor Mateh Levi, p. 109.

3. Union Prayerbook, Part II, pp. 242-3, and Machzor Mateh Levi, p. 111.

4. See Reines, "Authority and Reform Judaism."

5. Alvin J. Reines, "Reform Judaism."

6. Brown, Driver, and Briggs, See Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament, p. 846.

7. Alvin J. Reines, "Shabbath as a State of Being," Elements.

Footnotes -- Chapter 5

1. As stated in a recent visit to HUC-JIR (Cincinnati), and elsewhere.

2. Mordecai M. Kaplan, The Future of the American Jew, p. 49.

3. Ibid., p. 50.

4. Mordecai M. Kaplan, The Greater Judaism in the Making, p. 452.

5. Ira Eisenstein, Creative Judaism, p. 75.

6. Kaplan, The Future of the American Jew, p. 210.

7. Kaplan, The Greater Judaism in the making, pp. 224-225.

8. Kaplan, The Future of the American Jew, p. 420.

9. Eisenstein, op. cit., p. 63-64.

10. Kaplan, The Future of the American Jew, p. 377. See also Greater Judaism in the Making, pp. 85-86.

11. Mordecai M. Kaplan, Judaism in Transition, p. 176.

12. Ibid., p. 256-7.

13. Kaplan, The Greater Judaism in the Making, p. 458.

14. Ibid., p. 146, The Future of the American Jew, p. 198. The concept pervades his writings. Loyalty is discussed later on in this chapter.

15. See The Future of the American Jew, p. 379.

16. I.e., accepting both sense data and self-data as valid material for scientific study.

17. On "God" see e.g. Judaism Without Supernaturalism, p. 50, and Kaplan's The Meaning of God in Modern Jewish Religion.

18. Eisenstein, op. cit., p69.

19. Kaplan, Greater Judaism in the Making, pp. 85-86.

20. This view is supported in Creative Judaism, (a digest of Judaism as a Civilization,) pp. 121-122.

21. Eisenstein, op. cit., p. 61-68.

22. Ibid., p. 66.

23. A. J. Reines, "God and Jewish Theology," Elements.

24. Kaplan, Judaism Without Supernaturalism, p. 28.

25. Ibid., p. 29.

26. Eisenstein, op. cit., p. 114.

27. Kaplan, Greater Judaism in the Making, p. 463.

28. Eisenstein, op. cit., pp. 135-6.

29. Ibid., p. 121.

30. Kaplan, The Future of the American Jew, pp. 209-210.

31. Kaplan, The Meaning of God in Modern Jewish Religion, pp. 36-37.

32. See my Bibliography.

33. See Jewish Encyclopedia, "Allegorical Interpretation."

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