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# The Life And Works Of

# RABBI SAMUEL SCHULMAN

# As Reflected In His Writings:

## A Critical Historical Study of

## One of Reform's Most Significant Leaders

by

Lewis H. Kamrass

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for Ordination

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion
Cincinnati, Ohio

February, 1985

Referee:
Dr. Jacob R. Marcus

הנושה אשה הוגנת אליהו נושקא והקדוש ברוך הוא אוהבו

Who marries a worthy wife
is kissed by Elijah and loved by the Holy One
- Derech Eretz Rabbah

For
Renee:

With whom I gratefully share my friendship,
my love, and my life
Of whom, I will forever hope to be worthy.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

In heartfelt gratitude, I would like to thank the people without whose help and support this thesis would not have been possible:

I am grateful

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To Dr. Jacob R. Marcus, Director of American Jewish Archives, Milton and Hattie Kutz Distinguished Service Professor of American Jewish History, thesis advisor, and friend, who guided me, helped me, and allowed me to be "one of his boys."

מכל מלמדי השכלתי -Psalm 119:99

From all of my teachers, I have gained much wisdom, but Dr. Marcus' knowledge is more than history, it is a wisdom of life.

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DIGEST

Samuel Schulman (1864-1955) was one of the most distinguished Reform rabbis in American Jewish history. Educated in Europe, he was well-versed in philosophy, theology, and Jewish history, and possessed a brilliant mind along with outstanding oratorical skills. After having served congregations in New York, Helena, Montana, and Kansas City, Missouri, Schulman served as the rabbi of New York City's Temple Beth-El, and Temple Emanu-El after the consolidation of the two congregations. From this prestigious post and from his many leadership positions in many Jewish organizations, Schulman exerted a profound influence on his colleagues and on the Reform movement.

Schulman's theology is characterized by a theistic, God-centered orientation to Judaism. He rejected completely any approach to Judaism which did not have at its foundation a firm belief in God. As a result, he vigorously opposed humanism, ethical culture, atheism, and other secular philosophies. Schulman also viewed law as an essential element of Judaism, teaching that the Torah of God was divinely revealed, but identifying that revelation only with the Prophets and their moral imperatives. He departed from classical Reform ideas with his positive

views of ritual and ceremony, which he believed served to discipline a person for the rigors of the moral law. Schulman thus called for a greater inclusion of ritual in Reform, anticipating a direction which the movement would take some decades later. His theology was also marked by an indomitable hope, inspired by a commitment to the principle of Israel's divine election.

Because of his God-centered orientation, Schulman viewed Israel as primarily religious, subordinating the element of peoplehood to the principal attribute of religion. He promulgated the term "Keneseth Israel" to describe Israel as an historic religious community. With such a religious view of Israel, Schulman was an outspoken opponent of mixed marriage. Rejecting what he called racial and nationalistic conceptions of Israel, Schulman was an untiring, outspoken opponent of Zionism from the earliest days, arguing that its secular nature robbed Israel of its uniqueness and of its purpose, and contradicted the mission of Israel in which he firmly believed. Despite his opposition to Zionism, however, Schulman's sense of ahavat yisrael made him an early and consistent proponent of Palestinian development.

Like most classical Reformers, Schulman was a proud American who incorporated his Americanism into his religious thought. He claimed to have coined the term "melting pot" prior to Israel Zangwill's use of that term as a

description of America. Holding that America was the ideal representation of democracy and the best opportunity for the realization of Judaism's potential, Schulman involved himself in many issues that he believed challenged American ideals, including the separation of church and state, anti-Semitism, and religion in the public schools.

Because of his insight, his intellect, his oratorical skills, and his leadership, Schulman's thought transcends the historical conditions of his life and his era, rendering him an important figure for study. Many of the issues which he raised and for which he so vigorously fought remain important in the contemporary Reform movement. Thus, Schulman's thought provides the modern Reform Jew with a valuable resource by which to determine his/her own beliefs.

## CHAPTER I

## THE LIFE OF SAMUEL SCHULMAN

Samuel Schulman was born in Kalwarya, Russia on February 14, 1864 to Tanhum and Ruchoma Deborah Schulman. His father was a working man, who was fond of study and self-taught in Jewish learning; Tanhum was a distant cousin of Rabbi Shlomah Reines, a well known rabbi in Russian Poland. With this love of learning and of Judaism already part of his family, young Samuel began attending Cheder at the age of four. When his parents brought him to the United States some six months later in 1868, it is reported that the young Schulman already knew the basic principles of Hebrew well enough to read the prayerbook with some degree of fluency. Attending public schools of the city of New York, he studied Hebrew with private tutors. It is reported that by the age of eight, the young boy had begun the study of Talmud, and at age thirteen, he had studied five tractates, delivering a Talmudic discourse that impressed the listeners on the occasion of his Bar Mitzvah. It was at this time that his great intellectual capability was recognized and Schulman was invited to study at the Yeshiva of Wolozyn, Russia, an offer which

young Schulman declined, due to his wishes to remain in his new home, the United States.[1]

Schulman continued his secular education at the City College of New York in 1878 taking the commercial course of study which he completed in a year. He tried his hand at business for one and a half years, until he returned to City College to work on an undergraduate degree. Graduating in 1885, Schulman was awarded several honors including the gold medal for Latin and a Phi Beta Kappa key. After his years at City College, Schulman continued his education by journeying to Berlin where he enrolled in the University of Berlin, studying philosophy, political economy, and general literature. In addition, he trained for the rabbinate by concurrently attending the Hochschule fuer die Wissenschaft des Judenthums, completing the course of studies in 1889. This graduate work was made possible for him by a scholarship which he received from the prominent congregation of which he was later to serve as rabbi, New York's Emanu-El Congregation. Schulman later received a Doctor of Divinity (D.D.) degree from the Jewish Theological Seminary in 1904 and the Doctor of Hebrew Laws (D.H.L.) from the Hebrew Union College in 1925.[2]

After completing his studies in Berlin in 1889, Schulman returned to the United States where he preached his first sermon of his career on the last Friday evening of August, 1889 at Congregation Shalom of New York.

Little is known of this newly organized store-front congregation which was Schulman's first rabbinic pulpit. His tenure there was brief, lasting until March, 1890, when the congregation went out of existence.

Schulman then journeyed westward, accepting the pulpit of Congregation Emanu-El of Helena, Montana in April of that year. His work there lasted some three years until January of 1893, when he accepted the call to his next position.

For the next six years, Schulman was to settle in Kansas City, Missouri serving as the rabbi of Congregation B'nai Jehuda. "His six-year ministry in Kansas City was described as 'a series of successes' in which he captivated the community with the 'brilliance of his intellect and the depth of his mentality.'"[3] He was known as a popular speaker in the Christian community, speaking often in liberal Protestant pulpits; there is some evidence that he was received warmly within the Orthodox community, as well.[4] On November 4, 1898, Schulman accepted a speaking engagement at Congregation Beth-El in New York City. Preaching the same text that secured the Kansas City position some years earlier, he was offered the position of co-rabbi in this prestigious congregation. When he requested release from his Kansas City contract in an emotional appeal from the pulpit, the local newspapers covered this "story," complete with its description of the women in the congregation weeping![5] The congregation reluctantly released

him from his contract so that he might advance in his career by becoming the associate rabbi of Temple Beth-El of New York City in 1899.

His move to Beth-El would be his last, for this was to be Schulman's congregation for the rest of his life. When his senior rabbi, Kaufman Kohler was called to assume the presidency of the Hebrew Union College in 1903, Schulman assumed the position of senior rabbi. Shortly after coming to New York in 1899, Schulman became known for his outstanding oratory. On July 27, 1899, the young rabbi delivered an address at the forty-fifth annual dinner of the Equitable Life Assurance Society and was the youngest speaker of twelve. The following morning, the New York Times reported the event and stated that "now and then, they (fine orators) blossom in a night as did Wu Ting Fang, the Chinese Minister long ago; thus Henry W. Grady, thus Professor Twitchell of Yale--and thus blossomed at the Banquet Wednesday night Rabbi Samuel Schulman. It was the general opinion that Rabbi Schulman's effort outranked all the rest."[6] This was a story of which Schulman was quite fond of telling in later years. His early successes in New York continued as he became an important part of his congregation and the general Jewish community. In 1919, Congregation Beth-El rewarded their rabbi's leadership and efforts of twenty years with the congregation by presenting him with a gift of $20,000 raised by voluntary

contributions. On the occasion of his twenty-fifth anniversary with Beth-El, in December, 1923, the congregation bestowed upon him the honor of electing him rabbi for life, a rather rare distinction at that time in American Jewish life.[7]

In 1927, Temple Beth-El merged with Emanu-El Congregation to become Congregation Emanu-El of New York. The consolidation occurred because of the great similarity between the two congregations, the close proximity of the two congregations with Emanu-El's impending move to a new location, and the opportunity for Beth-El to be relieved of the great financial burden of its synagogue building.[8] Schulman continued in his post as rabbi of the new amalgamated congregation, sharing the position with Rabbis Nathan Krass and Hyman Enelow. To serve as a rabbi of the world's largest and most prestigious Jewish congregation was itself a reflection of the talent and capability of the incumbent.

He continued in that capacity until 1935, when he retired from active service to the congregation and was named Rabbi Emeritus. Schulman's last few years in the active congregational rabbinate at Emanu-El were not particularly happy ones for him. His correspondence tells of a less than cordial relationship between the three rabbis, with an inability to communicate with each other on basic issues of congregational life. Schulman felt

undermined at times by the uncomfortable situation at the new congregation. In 1935, all of the three rabbis were asked to retire, a decision with which Schulman was most unhappy. He preferred to continue in active service, but in the end bowed to the wishes of the congregation's executive board and accepted the retirement pension of $12,000 a year for life.[9] This final chapter in his forty-five year career of distinguished service in the congregational rabbinate was for him, a most unpleasant ending. The new Rabbi Emeritus was to enjoy a retirement of some twenty years. During that time he continued an active participation in many of his organizational endeavors.

In addition to his numerous responsibilities as a congregational rabbi, Samuel Schulman distinguished himself for outspoken and untiring service to a variety of Jewish causes. His varied organizational involvements attest to his vigorous participation in the shaping of Jewish affairs. Although he was most outstanding in his work within the Reform movement, Schulman's philosophical outlook embraced not only the limited parochical agenda of Reform, but extended widely into general Jewish concerns. We examine first his work and the causes he championed within a Reform context, and only then turn to wider areas of general communal involvement.

Perhaps Schulman's most active platform for participation in the Reform movement was the Central Conference

of American Rabbis. A member from 1892 until his death, Schulman served on its Executive Board for many years and as the organization's President from 1911-1913. In 1934, he was elected Honorary President.[10]

Schulman was especially proud of his work in other areas of the Reform organization structure, especially his thirteen-year tenure as a member of the U.A.H.C. Commission on Jewish Education from 1927-1940. He was the chairman of the Commission's Committee on Youth Education during his entire thirteen-year tenure, and played a major role as an initiating, persistant force leading to the establishment of the National Federation of Temple of Youth at whose founding convention in 1939 he preached the sermon. In addition, he served on the Education Commission's Committee on Commentaries until 1940, formulating the rules by which commentaries would be written, and overseeing the publication of the first commentary on Psalms. Schulman was made an honorary member of the Commission on Jewish Education.[11]

As part of his commitment to Jewish education, Schulman was president (1921-1926) and a founding member of the Association of Reform Rabbis of Greater New York and Vicinity. Under the auspices of this organization, he helped to establish the Hebrew Union College School for Teachers in New York City, serving as Chairman of the Board of Governors for its entire nine year existence.[12]

The school enrolled some 300 students each year before finally disbanding in 1932 due to financial hardship.[13]

Schulman's energetic involvement in the progress of Reform Judaism extended even beyond the national scope, when he helped to organize the World Union for Progressive Judaism in 1926. Schulman delivered an address at that initial conference in London, continuing his participation by returning to address the 1930 and 1934 W.U.P.J. conferences, as well.[14]

Although he held such important posts as these within the context of the Reform movement, it was not the official positions, but the platform for his views in which Schulman best expressed himself. This platform, along with over 1,100 of his sermons, addresses, and lectures serve as the window through which to view his philosophy, theology, and perspective on Judaism, especially in light of the fact that he did not write any book or major work during his career. Throughout his life, he was known as a vigorous, outspoken proponent for his many causes. Many of the best statements of his beliefs, his theology, and his passionate pleas were made known at the Central Conference.

In 1906, Schulman delivered the Conference Sermon to the Central Conference of American Rabbis, discussing "The Function of the Rabbi in His Relation to His People." It was in this powerful address that he brought to light

the rabbinic phrase "Keneseth Israel," which he translated Ecclesia Israel, or religious community of Israel, as an attempt to represent his religious outlook on Judaism. Schulman had rediscovered this term in rabbinic literature as a description of Israel once it had lost its nation and its land at the hand of the Romans. He characterized Israel as "a unique people . . . whose distinctive genius always has been and is religious . . . a congregation of Israel, a church, Keneseth Israel."[15] He was to promote ". . . the concept throughout his lifetime, infusing it with all the scholarship and warmth that were characteristic of him, but it never received general acceptance."[16] He suggested that the Jewish people had forever ceased to be a nation after the loss of its political status in 70 C.E. and as a result had been transformed into a religious community whose divine mission required it to be at home in all nations of the world.

In 1909, Schulman delivered his famous paper at the C.C.A.R. convention on the topic of Mixed Marriage. Here, Schulman made a clear statement of the philosophy of Judaism which he had long since adopted. He further attempted to demonstrate that such a philosophy of Judaism was incompatible with any Reform rabbi officiating at the marriage of Jewish and non-Jewish partners, for such a mixed marriage would serve to disintegrate the religious fabric of the home. His final resolution proposed:

> that it is the sentiment of this Conference that a Rabbi ought not to officiate at a marriage between a Jew and a person professing a religion other than Judaism, inasmuch as such mixed marriage is prohibited by the Jewish religion and would tend to disintegrate the religion of Israel.[17]

This resolution was modified by a committee on resolutions to a milder statement that mixed marriages are contrary to tradition and should be discouraged by the American rabbinate.

In 1920, Schulman once again played a major role in the shaping of Conference views, this time on the charged issue of Palestine and the recent Balfour Declaration. As chairman of the committee on President's message, the report was drafted solely by him. The resulting statement was to express the official opinion of the Conference on the subject of Palestine and Zionism until the major shift in orientation took place with the rise of the Zionist sentiment in the Conference and the adoption of the neutrality statement during the 1930's. Schulman's statement read:

> We do not subscribe to the phrase in the declaration which says Palestine is to be a national homeland for the Jewish people. We believe that Israel, the Jewish people, like every other religious communion, has the right to live, to be at home, and to assert its message in every part of the world.[18]

The report continued with the emphasis of Schulman's philosophy of Keneseth Israel, and the transformation of

Israel from a political to a religious entity, with its particular and unique mission to witness to God the world over.

Dr. Schulman offered perhaps the best summary of his views of Judaism at the 1935 Conference. There he delivered a paper entitled "Israel" alongside the young Abba Hillel Silver. Describing the essential differences between the Zionists and non-Zionists in a phrase which he coined during his first trip to Palestine some nine years earlier, he stated that "We Reform Jews or anti-Nationalists wish to be ba-goyim in the midst of the nations; the Nationalists say to the world, 'we wish to be ka-goyim, we wish to be like the nations.'"[19] This particular phrase gained much recognition in the Hebrew press in Palestine and was acknowledged by leading Zionists as a clear distinction.

> The papers on 'Israel' pitted a young gladiator in his prime against an aging lion of the Conference and produced the high-water mark of the Zionist anti-Zionist debate; . . . both papers were marked by deep scholarship and brilliant rhetoric.[20]

It was in this important address that Schulman called for unity in a bitterly divided Conference. He did not deny the concept of peoplehood, but he did reject the idea of Israel becoming a secular people, like other peoples. He reiterated his position for cooperation in seeing great merit in Palestine as a refuge and place of safety

for many endangered Jews. Thus, he called for unity with the Zionists in this raging intra-Conference dilemma, on the common ground of helping to resettle persecuted Jews in Palestine. In this paper, as well, Schulman puts forth his conception of Torah as "Law demanding obedience," or more precisely, the moral law of the prophets; the adaptable ceremonial law was valuable insofar as it served as the symbol or representation of the timeless moral law.[21] Schulman believed this to be a unique idea, for he had shown that the word Torah, as used by the prophets, can by synonymous with moral law; thus a Reform Jew could now subscribe to the belief in the "Torah" as one of the essential three Jewish elements of God, Israel and Torah.[22]

It was in 1937 that Schulman was to return to the Conference floor with his systematic statement of the ideals of Reform. In response to the fiftieth anniversary of the Pittsburgh Platform, Schulman had assumed the chairmanship of a commission to frame a platform. Schulman had drawn up a platform which he distributed to the commission before taking ill and subsequently resigning the chair. At the Columbus Convention in 1937, the Commission presented its own proposed platform, while Schulman presented his lengthier Statement of Principles. After a series of complicated and close votes, the Conference chose to adopt the commission's statement

which became known as the Columbus platform. Due to the narrow margin, however, the Executive Board made the unprecedented decision to print Schulman's rejected Statement of Principles in the Year Book of the Conference. It was published in volume 47, 1937. His Statement most clearly differed with the adopted Platform in its greater length, its stronger language, and its more polemical tone.

Schulman's vigorous participation in Reform Jewish life did not prevent him from undertaking a similar energetic involvement in the general Jewish community. Indeed, despite his reputation as an outspoken champion of Reform, Schulman was also known as a Reform leader who could work well with other Jewish communal leaders. Thus, he took on many activities that were of importance to him. In particular, Schulman labored as an active member of the Jewish Publication Society's Publication Committee for over thirty years. He first immersed himself in the important work of the Jewish Publication Society as a Central Conference of American Rabbis representative by sitting on the editorial board of the J.P.S. Bible Translation. He participated as one of the seven editors who labored on the project for seven years, completing the translation in 1916. Later, he continued with the Jewish Publication Society, serving in the capacity as one of the editors of the Jewish Classics series from the time of its inception.[23]

In his other efforts to arrive at some degree of unity among American Jews, Schulman became an active member of the American Jewish Committee. In addition, he was a member of the Synagogue Council of America since its establishment and served as its president from 1934-1935. On a more local level, he served as director and vice-president of the Young Men's Hebrew Association of the City of New York for over a generation, acting as Chairman of its Committee on Education for seven years.[24]

Schulman was a member of the New York Board of Ministers since its earliest days. Most notably, he served as Chairman of the organization's Interfaith Committee. In that capacity, he represented the Board at the historic meeting of the Board of Education of New York Public Schools in 1940 at which he successfully argued in favor of "dismissal time" (all students dismissed early to have time available for religious instruction for those who wish) and against "release time" (certain children dismissed at a certain time for religious instruction) as a viable solution to the dilemma of religion within the public schools.[25] Schulman helped to formulate a similar resolution within the Central Conference of American Rabbis regarding religion and the public schools.

Samuel Schulman was widely believed to be a good scholar, possessing powerful intellectual abilities.

Even those who opposed his views respected his intellectual gifts and the power that they brought to his arguments. It is certainly unusual then, that he published no large works. Indeed, his only formal publications are found in his contributions to the tract commission and to religious and scholarly periodicals. Yet Schulman's forum for expression was the pulpit as best expressed in the voluminous collection of over 1,500 sermons and addresses found in his papers.

> The combination of Dr. Schulman's splendid mental and vocal powers must have played a determining part in his rabbinical career. Men tend to do most what they do best. The very ease and confidence with which he was able to express himself in public, in any gathering in fact, inclined him to the forensic forum and to the mental arena rather than to a cloistered existence in the pursuit of scholarship.[26]

Many of his sermons and addresses were also published in pamphlet form, and of course, the sermons and papers presented to Central Conference of American Rabbis are published in the Conference Yearbooks. Among the more notable of Schulman's publications are "Jewish Ethics," a tract essay published by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations which summarized the fundamental elements of that subject for popular use in a clear, concise fashion. He published two articles in the Jewish Quarterly Review. In volume 18, #4, 1928, he provided a systematic review entitled "Professor Moore's Judaism," discussing the classic work by that author. In addition, in 1914,

volume 5, #2, Schulman's article "Chamberlain's Foundations of the Nineteenth Century and the Claims of Judaism" reviewed Houston Stewart Chamberlain's book. Other articles appeared in the periodicals Outlook (January 5, 1916-"Why American Jews are Opposed to Zionism"), Menorah Journal (April, 1918-"Searching the Jewish Heart" and August-September, 1924-"The Mission of Israel"), Contemporary Jewish Record (October, 1942-"A Basis for Union in Israel: Essentials of the Jewish Problem"). Schulman's best expression of his thought, presented in his paper "Israel," was published posthumously in Joseph Blau's Reform Judaism: A Historical Perspective. Schulman also wrote several articles for encyclopedias, specifically on "Calumny" and "Cardinal Virtues" for the Jewish Encyclopedia, and on "Kaufmann Kohler" for the Universal Jewish Encyclopedia.[27] Over fifty of Samuel Schulman's numerous sermons and addresses were published in pamphlet form by his congregation, primarily, but also by various organizations before which those addresses were delivered.

## CHAPTER II

## SAMUEL SCHULMAN AND AMERICA

> If one asked me what are the fundamental beliefs which have dominated your own spiritual life, which have been the innermost convictions of your own heart, which have inspired your message to men, I would say: I believe in God, I believe in Israel, His servant, on behalf of mankind, and I believe in America, God's word to humanity, God's revelation through political democracy.[28]

While Samuel Schulman spent a great deal of his energy and talents in important issues of Jewish concern, the general world beyond the Jewish community did not escape his thought and activity. Indeed, he labored in a variety of areas of local, interfaith, and general concerns including them as an integral part of his ministry. America was more than an adopted home, more than an object of patriotic affection. For Schulman, America was one of the fundamental pillars of his entire belief system, a source of inspiration and much hope. His total religious outlook incorporated this passionate involvement with America, in the ideal, as well as in reality. Schulman's great belief in America was displayed with a spiritualistic fervor and zeal, demonstrating his profound belief in America's historical uniqueness, its bold representation of the future, and as the best environment for the expression of Jewish ideals.

Samuel Schulman often boasted of America's historical uniqueness, having organized itself on the basis of principles instead of background. He asserted that America was the first nation in the world to establish itself on the basis of rights, principles and freedom in place of racial, national, or religious grounds.[29] He spoke of this unique foundation as the genius of this country. "America is a vote of confidence in humanity . . . The individuality of Americanism consists exactly in this--that it has become the meeting ground of races . . ."[30] So deep was his belief in America's historical significance, that the expression of this belief found its way into Schulman's 1937 proposed Statement of Principles for Reform Judaism:

> Not blood or racial descent, but the dignity of the human spirit--the consciousness of our common humanity, is the cornerstone of the National life. America, by its genius and constitution, is the very opposite of any theory which makes a modern nation rest upon racial origin or profession of creed, instead of the moral worth of the individual.[31]

For Schulman, this thoroughgoing recognition of America's historical genius was not to be lost in the ideal or theoretical. Indeed, he was an outspoken critic of several practical issues that he feared would weaken this historic foundation. He was deeply concerned that America's entry into World War I would be the greatest crisis in the nation's history, apprehensive that American uniqueness would be dangerously influenced by the European

emphasis on racial and nationalistic origins.[32] Still later, when immigration restrictions seemed imminent, Schulman vigorously opposed such changes, appealing to the historical uniqueness of America that had comprised the American spirit.[33] Thus, concerning the real issues that confronted America, Schulman's liberal positions drew from the wellspring of the ideal that he believed America had always been.

Along with this keen appreciation of the foundations of the past, however, Schulman also maintained that America was the great symbol of the future. The unprecedented organization of this nation on the basis of human rights made America ". . . the noble illustration of what a nation ought to be in the modern sense of the world . . . it is . . . the clearly conceived humanitarian nation of the world."[34] As a child of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Schulman held a firm belief in human progress. For him, the uniqueness of America represented a clarion call of the future, the mirror of what world destiny would hold. Organized along the union of individuals from varied racial, national, and religious backgrounds, Schulman believed that America was indeed, a microcosm of the mechanism that would ultimately usher in the messianic era. "Americanism woven of the threads of freedom and law-abiding cooperation of men is the symbol of the destined union of all races,

when the honorable rivalries of genius and industry will be harmonized by the law of righteousness and the reign of peace."[35] He often asserted that America was a great experiment in the embodiment of prophetic ideals, animating them with life and the potential to be realized. In this sense, he believed America was truly a prophecy to humanity, a beacon to the future through human progress. He viewed this ultimate goal as attainable through his summary of the nation's three-fold foundation. ". . . (it is) built upon the individual man, it is cemented by the idea of union, and it is prophecy in its institutions of a freed and united humanity."[36] In this summary, he included the fundamental idea of the dignity of mankind. In his view, America best incorporated the principle of the divine element in all humans found in the biblical conception of man created in the image of God. Dignity of the common person naturally led to liberty, which allowed for the fullest freedom to attain the unlimited divine possibilities in every individual. He suggested that the second concept of union was messianic since the progress of humankind began with isolation and culminated in human cooperation. In combining the dignity of the individual with the union of many people, Schulman held that America was indeed prophetic, a microcosm for the attainable ideal, the foretaste of the messianic dream. ". . . America is the representative nation, the symbol of a possible union of men of all races and creeds in a

humanity which embraces them."[37] Indeed he saw America's place in a greater scheme of human history and progress:

> This America of ours, our beloved Country, is in my humble opinion, the crown of the whole development of what began at Sinai at what was perfected in Jerusalem. I do not think we realize what a tremendous experiment our Country, our American nation, has been making, and thus far successfully in the world's history. Certainly we Jews ought to be conscious of America's prophecy to humanity, its example to mankind . . .[39]

Schulman best summarized his own philosophy of America, coining the phrase "melting pot" in a Passover sermon, :Shall American Judaism Surrender Its Ideals?" delivered March 30, 1907. The sermon, and the phrase it contained was published in pamphlet form and appeared in the American Israelite two weeks later. The expression became popularized some two years later in the American version of the play bearing that name by I. Zangwill.[39] Specifically, he described his vision of an America that would be a "melting pot" of nationalities, in which

> . . . dross should be melted away and the fine gold of every racial heritage should be encouraged to contribute to the great human service which is the enterprise of our beloved America. Its prophecy is the production of the American, who will be a new type of man, free, liberal, generous, just and universal, but intensely patriotic, because he will know that American nationality carries the message of glad tidings to universal humanity . . .[40]

Two decades later, in defending this notion of American society which had come under attack, Schulman reiterated

his belief stating that ". . . I recognize no hyphen . . . in American life."[41] Schulman regarded the public schools as the best agency to reflect the American spirit, producing the total American without regard to national or religious background, calling it "palladium of our Americanism."[42]

It was this philosophy of the "melting-pot" of America that lent itself to Schulman's understanding of the American Jew. Indeed, the sermon in which he first coined that term was a sermon opposing the Zionist philosophy of Jewish life. Schulman made it quite clear throughout his career that for the American Jew, America was his nationality, and Judaism his religion. He rejected any attempt by non-Jews or Jews to imply that being Jewish prevented one from being "truly American." Thus, his description of the humanitarian, messianic spirit of American institutions drew from his experience as a Jew, and the complete freedom that Jews found in this country. Schulman's perspective placed America as the paradigm of democracy, and as the celebration of democratic ideals and institutions at their best. He felt that the beginning of modern democracy had Jewish roots in its premise of individual infinite worth because of the infinite within humans. Democracy, thus began with the Bible at its root, in the doctrine of the Fatherhood of man and the brotherhood of mankind. But while the Bible was the root, it

was also the restraint of democracy, demanding righteousness and a quality to democracy.

> If the Bible voices the heart's yearning for a united humanity, it energizes the demand of the conscience for a righteousness that is to govern that humanity . . . Whatever democracy exists in the world today has been developed as a result of the restraint of the powerful and the masterful individuals in the name of a law and of a God greater than they.[43]

Thus, the American Jews received a democracy that had been born in his Judaism, now being fashioned in a new era and land. Schulman believed America was a land that offered the Jew something that had never been offered to the Jew in such abundance, ". . . the grandest opportunity ever offered the Jewish genius for the devotion to the ideals and the hopes of the Hebrew Prophets."[44] For Schulman, America represented the most fertile ground for the harvest of Jewish (i.e., prophetic) ideals, enabling the Jew to most fully live as a Jew according to Jewish ideals. As a full, equal partner in the American nation, the Jew could most completely realize the Jewish potential within him, and Judaism could see its most fruitful fulfillment in many centuries of its history. Corresponding to the great opportunity America offered to the Jew, he was quick to point out the responsibility involved, as well. Toward the end of his career, Schulman summarized his perspectives:

> As I look back upon all my experience and efforts during this last half-century, I may say that Americanism as I understand it, became part of my religion. I consider the American environment as the greatest opportunity which has been offered the Jew in the course of his wonderful story, rich as it is 'in duty and in glory.' Here we are called upon to make good, because the American environment with its glorious traditions and democratic ideals, gives us perfect freedom to be our best selves and to contribute to America the moral and spiritual power of Judaism as a great religion. This Americanism is very deep in me.[45]

It was Schulman's hope that every American, and especially, every American Jew would share this fervor. He was proud of his success in integrating the American and the Jewish elements of his life into a unified tapestry of thought. Toward the end of his career, he spoke on a number of occasions of the two most moving moments of his life, each one representing a particular aspect of his life. He spoke of the overpowering emotion he felt when he first saw the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem and as well, when as president of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, in laying a wreath on George Washington's tomb. Each experience seemed to capture the roots and the hopes of which Schulman often spoke. "Each was natural and touched the deepest things of the soul, love of country and love of Judaism, and of Israel its servant in the world. I think every Jew and Jewess is capable of such a twofold experience."[46]

Schulman's expression of America transcended the realm of the ideal or theoretical, however, for he believed every American, and every Jew, in particular, had a profound responsibility to safeguard the ideals in the realistic realm. In his long career, he became known as a champion of the separation of the religious and secular domains, especially in the areas of politics and education.

In keeping with his view of the American Jew, Schulman rejected any attempt to combine the American and the Jew in making political decisions. He endeavored to make the distinction between Jewish religion and American nationality a clear separation. As a rabbi, Schulman seldom discussed political issues from the pulpit as an attempt to sway his listeners to a particular partisan position.

> Unless there is a clean-cut, ethical issue in a political campaign, a Rabbi, a Minister or Priest, ought to refrain from appealing to the voters for any man or party. Nothing is more degrading to religion and detrimental to both State and Church than the spectacle of a minister of religion on the stump, making partisan speeches. For such action is the subtlest violation of the principle of Church and State.[47]

Schulman's belief in the principle of separation of church and state was unwavering in depth and in scope. He regarded it with a zeal and fervor, as if it were a sacred principle. Any attempt to traverse the wide gulf between the two was, to his mind, an assault on a sacred principle, and on an

essential element of America itself. In political campaigns, he often encouraged his congregants to exercise their responsibility to America by voting, likening the covenant of the voting booth to the biblical ark of the covenant. When one entered that voting booth, one entered as an American, and not as a Jew. Any attempt to appeal to the Jew based on his religion in order to receive his vote was a misguided approach.

> To me, Judaism is most sacred. It expresses the deepest and holiest convictions of my life. I do not wish to see it dragged down to the mire of political controversy . . . Jews are only justified in voting as Jews, when they resent a prejudice against them and when they punish an invidious distinction made against them, because they are Jews.[48]

Thus, in Schulman's understanding, the Jew might pray as a Jew, touched by the covenant made with Israel, but that same Jew would enter the voting booth as an American, with little reference to creed, aware only of his covenant with America.

Schulman articulated this impenetrable separation of secular and religious in the educational realm, as well. A great believer in the power of the public school as the greatest force to transform the ideal America into the real one, Schulman tolerated no infusion of religion into the schools, no matter how subtle its form. Early in his career, while still in Kansas City, he successfully opposed the practice of Bible readings in the public schools.[49]

Later in his career, Schulman was to tackle the heated issue of religion in the public schools by entering the controversy over the teachings of ethics as a substitute for religion in the schools. Within the Central Conference of American Rabbis, he argued against any compilation of ethical readings to be discussed in public schools. For many, such an approach served as a compromise for avoiding the teaching of religion in the schools, while at the same time, not depriving the students of the important lessons which religion might offer. Schulman vigorously opposed such a compromise solution, for he asserted that the secular discussion of ethics was to compromise religion itself. He viewed the teaching of ethical instruction separately from religion as a contradiction of terms, for religion and ethics were inseparable. Ethical instruction in such a form would be an endorsement of divorcing of ethics from religion.[50] With a consistency on this issue that spanned his career, he later stated:

> We are committed to the proposition that morality and religion are indissoluably bound together. According to the Jewish religion nine tenths of the content of religion as such is what we call morality, and morality without religion is impossible.[51]

> Religionists believe that, in the last analysis, ethics root in religion, that there can be no sanction, in the deepest sense, for morality, for duty, for social obligation, without the recognition that the law of our life is the expression of God's will.[52]

Schulman made no secret of his distaste for the Ethical Culture movement, and the successful inroads which it made into the community to which he ministered. He feared that such ethical instruction in the schools would hand a victory to the ethical culturists, creating the impression that ethics alone were self-sufficient. Such an approach, he asserted, would foster ". . . a generation of fine men and women who will have nothing to do with religious questions. Let us teach them morality, and for us, morality is religion."[53]

In 1925, Schulman presented a clear understanding of the subject of Bible Reading in the public schools and the important issues involved. He described the public dissatisfaction with education because the education of a child is incomplete without the inclusion of religion.

> We cannot, if we are going to safeguard the principle of a separation of Church and State . . . unite religion and education in our schools. Therefore, the problem for the American people is: how to find a way by which it will satisfy its craving for a complete and proper education, of which religion is an indispensable part, and at the same time, safeguard the principle of the separation of Church and State.[54]

That same year, Schulman presented an excellent paper to the Central Conference of American Rabbis on this topic which had become a critical issue and American Jewish life. His analysis, "Bible Reading in the Public Schools and the Ethical and Religious Education of the American

People" outlined three aspects at the cause of the clamor for Bible Readings in Public schools: an attempt to Christianize the schools, the realization that there are insufficient ethical teachings, and the realization of a growing ignorance of the Bible. Completely rejecting the first aspect of the cause, Schulman suggested that to Christians, non-sectarian actually meant non-denominational, yet still Christian.[55] In addition, he pointed out that Bible reading without interpretation of explanation would be of little value to the students, and any attempt to interpret or explain would, by definition, infuse a specific religion's thought as opposed to another religion's perspective.[56] Concerning the second aspect of this controversy, Schulman was quick to urge his colleagues to cooperate. Although he was an outspoken critic of ethical instruction in the schools, he cautioned fellow rabbis to avoid the strictly negative attitude of opposition. Instead, he advised combining this opposition to secular instruction of ethics with cooperating in whatever steps are necessary to improve the nation's ethical and religious spirit.

> We must do all in our power to assist the churches in the ethical upbuilding of the nation. Separation of church and state does not mean the secularization of the government . . . We must make it clear that the fact that we have taken a negative attitude in this matter does not mean that we are opposed to religion or the ethical betterment of the nation.

> The separation of church and state is negative insofar as it tries to prevent the forcing of the conscience of any individual . . . because we are compelled jealously to watch our rights as a religious minority and insist upon the separation of church and state, (we) must not put ourselves in the position exclusively of secularists.[57]

Finally, concerning the motive of concern about the growing ingnorance of the Bible, Schulman presented three contemporary suggested approaches to teach Bible and improve religious instruction in the nation. He outlined and rejected the Dakota or Colorado plan, where students were given school credit for instruction given elsewhere in Biblical history and literature. In addition, he presented his opposition to formal ethical instruction, a second alternative. Schulman did embrace, however, a third alternative, known as the Gary plan. Under such a proposal, school would be closed early on a given day, with such time being given as the opportunity for each religious denomination to offer religious instruction to their children. In this manner, no religious instruction would occur within the framework of the school, thereby avoiding any dangerous mixture of church and state. At the same time, the student's religious instruction would receive more time than the insufficient Sunday morning, one and one-half hours per week that was offered by most denominations.[58]

> This proposal asking for reduction in hours of time making possible for churches effectively to bring religious influence to bear, shows that we agree that education is not complete without religion. We protect our rights as a minority, at the same time protect the high American standards, and also, tell the nation that we feel the great difficulties, the problem confronting us, instead of merely registering a negative objection with no constructive alternative.[59]

Placing so much emphasis on the importance of the separation of church and state afforded Schulman the opportunity to work closely with liberal church leaders. As a result, Schulman forged close friendships and working relationships with several Christian clergymen. Over the long span of his career, Schulman gained a number of insights about the Christian religion and its relationship to Judaism. In an era when many Jews were expressing their own assimilation and acculturation into American society through a flirtation with various liberal Christian denominations, Schulman was therefore, often in a position to share his thoughts on Christianity. While he would touch on some basis of commonality between Judaism and its daughter religion, he differed from many other clergymen in boldly proclaiming the differences between the two religions. Those differences which he enumerated are most interesting to explore, as well as his view of Christianity's attitude to Judaism and his outspoken criticisms of the majority religion.

Like many preachers of the day, Schulman spoke of the common basis which Christianity and Judaism shared. He saw the common monotheism between the great religions as a platform for cooperation and a hope for future union. Yet Schulman was wary of any contemporary attempt to forge such a union by dismissing religious differences.[61] Therefore, he was an outspoken opponent of Dr. John Haynes Holmes' Community Church that had appealed to some Jews, as well as Christians. The two religious leaders carried on a vigorous series of correspondence exchanging views on the concept of Jews and Christians worshipping in common. Schulman asserted that the cooperation and fellowship of American Jews and Christians were best achieved on the basis of shared Americanism, and not in attempts to fuse the two religions into a new kind of church.[62]

> Jews and Christians shall unite wherever they can, in good cause, and in their common consciousness of their American heritage of freedom of thought, of justice for men and fair play, and of mutual helpfulness, but (that) they should keep their religions apart.[63]

While Schulman did discuss this basis for interfaith cooperation through the arena of shared Americanism, his primary focus in his treatment of Christianity was to highlight the differences between it and Judaism. Schulman felt that such differences were critical not only in religious thought, but in the manner in which those beliefs profoundly affected human conduct, as well as world events.

Despite the number of occasions on which Schulman offered his thoughts concerning Christianity, he stated that he did not like discussing the topic due to its delicate nature. In correspondence with Dr. John Haynes Holmes he confided that:

> In a world that has Ku Klux Klans, that has millions of Babbitts, in which the echoes of the shrieks of Jewish martyrs in pogroms have still not died away in the hearts of humane men and women of all creeds, it is not easy for a Jew to discuss the difference between Judaism and Christianity. There is not freedom of thought enough in the Western World for a Jew to say what is in his heart. I weigh my words well, because I am always conscious of how my words may be twisted and so become a menace to my brethren. It is for that reason alone that I do not like to be compelled to discuss Judaism in comparison with Christianity.[60]

If Schulman did sincerely feel that discussing the topic was distasteful for him, he must have felt a powerful compulsion to address the issues, nevertheless. In the one hundred fifteen most significant sermons and addresses of his career, designated by Schulman, some thirteen addresses were devoted, in part or in entirety, to discussion of Christianity. Further, while Schulman may have carefully weighed his words, his treatment of Christianity displayed the same bold, outspoken tone with which he approached many other topics. His thoughts were cogent, consistent, and comprehensive, but those words were far from delicate, timid or reserved.

Schulman was not reluctant to compare major issues between the two religions, and further, as a result of such comparison, to claim practical and moral superiority for Judaism. His was not a defensive apologia, but rather his remarks often took on a triumphalistic polemical tone. In his correspondence with Holmes, Schulman candidly revealed thoughts which he had only subtly intimated in public, that Judaism was, without question, a superior religion to Christianity, especially for the modern era. His claim was based on his perception of Judaism as being more open for moderns to explore their own beliefs, and to adapt the Law of righteousness to changing demands of each new generation. Schulman held ". . . that I haven't one particle of doubt in my mind that Judaism has a greater appeal to the modern man, or should have, if there were not the prejudice against the Jew, than Christianity."[64] Specifically, Schulman's bold assertion rested on the major differences of views about Messiah and salvation. (See Chapter IV.)

Perhaps the greatest difference which he saw in the two religions was the attitude of each toward personality. Schulman was fond of summarizing the differences in stating that:

> Judaism does not deal with personalities. It deals with principles. In Judaism, principle was always superior to personality . . . the most important thing . . . is always the principle of duty, the obligation to obey what is right and to translate it into life.[65]

He contrasted this position to Christianity's central focus on the personality of Jesus. He questioned the wisdom of focusing human thought and emotion upon a personality who lived some nineteen-hundred years ago. Indeed, he questioned the usefulness of establishing religious thought in any personality. He contrasted Christianity's crucial focus on Jesus with Judaism's major personalities, who were important, but not objects of worship.

> The Jewish religion recognizes the creative power of personalities, but its distinctive character consists in this, that it makes principle superior to personality. Not a man is to be worshipped, but the Eternal who speaks through him, and the law, which is greater than he. The Jew's religion is a way of life, not given for all by a man, but expressed in a categorical imperative, which is greater than and binding upon all men.[66]

This comparison of religion around the fundamental issue of personality (i.e., Jesus) led to a completely different orientation. For Schulman, the Jewish messianic hope turned the believer optimistically toward the future, always aspiring to work towards such a hope. For the Christian, however, he held that the orientation was a backwards one. For him, the Christian belief centered on Jesus carried an attitude of

> . . . fulfillment, as against the Jews' continued aspiration. It means the emphasis of the glory of one son of Israel as against the recognition of the whole people as a servant of the Eternal. It means the emphasis of man against God, who according to the Jewish view, is superior to any man, and had never

> exhausted his glory in any one life . . . There cannot be a greater contrast than is implied in this word, between the fundamental thought of Judaism, that is still aspiring, and which says the Messiah has not yet come, and Christianity which looks back to that historic vision and says, all Messianic hopes have been fulfilled.[67]

Perhaps the reason that Schulman regarded this particular religious difference as the most important contrast was his own particular belief in the consuming religious imperative of hope. His view of the messianic era, discussed in Chapter IV incorporated that Jewish passion for hope. He believed, however, that such a Christian focus on Jesus with its corresponding orientation in the past destroyed that quintessentially Jewish ideal of hope, and thereby rendered the Christian idea ill-suited for a progressive world. He celebrated this Jewish concept of a messianic era, stating that

> the kernel of the Messianic idea consists in a wistful looking forward . . . The realization of the idea for the progressive spirit must indeed always be in the future . . . Christianity took this Messianic idea and fixed it on one historic event, embodied it in one life, exhausted it in one man. It therefore, strictly speaking, reversed the Jewish idea, instead of looking forward, humanity is asked to look backward.[68]

Schulman was also quick to point out the differences between Judaism and Christianity regarding salvation. He often criticized the Christian emphasis on creed, for he felt that it fostered a withdrawal from the events and concerns of life. He charged that such a preoccupation

with creed tended to shadow the importance of active involvement in the events of the world. Such a tendency, for which he held Christianity responsible, had resulted in the decline of the importance of religion for the masses.

> The Church spoke altogether too much and too often of heaven, and thus erected a barrier in men's minds between their interests in this world and their destinies in the next. It is for that reason, perhaps, that religion is, on the whole, comparatively external to modern life. It appears with shrinking modesty as a foot-note . . .[69]

In contrast, Schulman pointed to the value of the Jewish emphasis on deed and conduct in attaining salvation. He often spoke of his belief that religion's purpose was to transform the natural instincts of a person into the conduct of righteousness. "Certainly the Jewish religion had always laid great stress upon the character of conduct as the only proof of the sincerity of religious convictions."[70] He compared the transcendence of God in Christianity with its eye towards the next world to the combination of divine transcendence and immanence in Jewish thought, grounded solidly in this world. Schulman decried the consequences of this Christian belief for the attitude and conduct of its millions of adherants: "Instinctively, it fled the problems of this world and made salvation in the immortality of a hereafter the supreme concern of the masses. And I hold this was not good moral education for the masses."[71]

Clearly, Schulman did not merely draw contrasts and comparisons between Judaism and Christianity merely to educate his congregants. His polemics were intended to provide the listener with the clear understanding that Judaism was indeed superior to Christianity and the most appropriately suited religion for the modern era. And although he may have claimed to delicately select his words on the topic, Schulman's tone was triumphant in his religious comparisons. He was even more bold and audacious in his numerous criticisms of Christianity. For Schulman would often begin a comparison of the two religions only to arrive at a criticism of Christianity. As the majority faith of the world, Schulman blamed many of the contemporary ills of the world on the reigning religion. On more than one occasion Schulman would blame the great ills of the world on the failure of Christianity. In a sermon entitled "A Sick But Young World," he examined the various aspects of the disillusionment and dissatisfaction that were so pervasive following World War I. He discussed the loss of faith that followed the war and the corresponding discredit that came to religion. He lambasted the rampant materialism and racialism that he attributed as leading causes of the war and its ensuing disillusionment, finding fault with Christianity as having contributed to these causes in its neglect to emphasize the law and discipline of righteousness. He asserted

that the world's

> . . . religious homage meant only the service of the lips, and not the consecration of the heart. Christendom made of faith a luxuriant dream of a bliss in a transcendental heaven. It did not take it as a necessity and interpret it as a law for right living on earth.[72]

In addition to the transcendental emphasis on salvation, Schulman also criticized Christianity for contributing to the great upheaval in the contemporary world through its idea of Messiah which he had so often discussed (see Chapter IV). He attempted to discredit the idea of anticipating the miraculous, and instead emphasized that the world would be saved only by law and the Jewish conception of operating under that moral law to bring about redemption.[73]

It was not only with the tense post-War disillusionment that Schulman placed blame on Christianity as the majority faith for the many problems and conflicts in the world; during both early and late periods of his career did Schulman echo a similar critique.

Shortly before the war, he contrasted the principles of Christianity to the obvious contradiction of those principles by which the western (read Christian) world lived. He was always quick to point out that Christianity had not been original in its religion, as had Judaism. He often reminded his listeners that Christianity had taken fundamental Jewish concepts and transformed them,

even distorted them.[74] Even in his retirement, Schulman rested full responsibility on the majority faith for the deplorable condition of the Western world. He intimated the feebleness of Christianity in its inability to realize its own ideals:

> The question naturally arises why it is that after fifteen hundred years undisputed spiritual authority of the reigning creed, we witness this spectacle of world slaughter on a scale and with a destructive efficiency unparalleled in history . . . One answer might be that Christianity has not been tried . . . Certainly if the whole Western world had taken Christianity seriously we would have no world war today . . . My answer is that the method of the reigning creed has not been the best. The moral and spiritual education of the Western world has been inadequate.[75]

There was yet another area for which Schulman was quick to criticize his Christian colleagues for their lack of effectiveness, namely their attitude toward the Jews. Although he had joined in common causes with many liberal Christian leaders, on more than one occasion, he berated even those religious allies for their views on Judaism. Despite the admirable qualities of broad-mindedness, sympathy, and tolerance that the liberal attitude encompassed, he asserted that many Christian liberals still held firmly to the idea that Christianity was the more advanced faith, that it was religion in its highest form and other religions were outmoded. Schulman lamented that despite that liberal sympathy and tolerance, even the most open-minded of liberals believed that Christianity is the:

> ne ultra plus of religious development. Therefore other religions are regarded as either inferior competitors or superficial anachronisms. That Judaism is an anachronism, is on the whole, its attitude to Judaism, expressed or implied. In its mind, there is always the assumption that Christianity is superior . . . the cornerstone of their thought is Christ, and by comparison, Judaism seems to them not to have reached complete maturity.[76]

This attitude expressed even by liberal thinkers was indicative of Christian ingratitude for the great debt it owed to Judaism. Schulman often drew comparisons between the mother and daughter religions, quick to demonstrate how Christian thought relied so greatly on its Jewish roots. He claimed that the extent of Christian ingratitude to the Jewish religion as expressed through their treatment of Jews was appalling and without excuse or justification. Forgoing any concern for delicate description, he boldly insisted that

> The profoundest problem of Christendom is that of justice to the Jew. It owes him a debt which it has not yet paid. It therefore has a troubled conscience, with respect to the people, from whose genius it received its own soul . . . it hates its own spiritual benefactor, and thus smites him with its own sin. Disdaining to acknowledge him as the prophet, it eases its own conscience and justifies its ingratitude by making him the scapegoat.[77]

As a result of this unacknowledged debt, Schulman laid much responsibility for Jewish suffering on the shoulders of Christian leaders. Recognizing Christianity's large number of adherants, and the great power of the

churches to influence the thought and behavior of the masses, his disappointment in the leaders of Christianity for their inability to influence soon gave way to sharp criticism, perhaps even bitterness.

> If Christendom really believes in the unity of mankind, it will cease to encourage the hatred of the Jew. The chief concern of the Church should be to prove that the Jew need not suffer, because of his racial origin or religious convictions. If the Church in Christendom consented to preach and practice the perfect recognition of the right of the Jew to live, it would undo, in one generation, the effects of the sins and errors of a millenium.[78]

Because of this suffering which so many Jews had experienced under the direct or tacit approval of church leaders, Schulman challenged the religious leaders to live up to the ideals which their faith professed. Audaciously, with no attempt to soften his charges, he stated on more than one occasion that the real test for the sincerity of Christianity was Christendom's treatment of Jews, a people of minority religious and 'ethnic' status.[79] To his mind, as long as Jews continued to suffer cruelty at the hands of Christians, then the majority religion was failing the test of its own ideals and convictions.

> That the Jew can still be the object of race hatred, of prejudice and of ostracism, is the severest condemnation of our civilization and demonstrates either the impotence or the insincerity of those who profess Christianity with their lips and deny it by their deeds.[80]

Schulman would not be satisfied with the attitude of Christians toward their Jewish brethren until the relationship was fully equal. His demand was rigorous, and the manner in which he made such an ultimatum was quite unique. Unlike other Jewish clergy and leaders who were content with the attitude of Christian tolerance of Jews, Schulman's deeply rooted sense of Americanism with its full essence of equality caused him to view such a response as weak and insufficient. In clear, stirring and unapologetic tone, he often insisted that

> There has been talk of tolerance, which is an insult. There has been the suggestion of generosity, which is a condescension. Why should there not be right and equality for the Jew, to live his spiritual life in the Western world without molestation?[91]

Drawing on this belief, Schulman was a vigorous fighter of anti-Semitism throughout his rabbinic career. His fundamental belief was that anti-Semitism was a real concern for Jews and for Judaism, to which a careful, level analysis should be brought, in order that an effective response could be articulated. He conceded that it was a natural tendency for a person to view a fellow human of different beliefs or origin with suspicion; despite this natural reaction however, Schulman assigned to religion the responsibility of transforming the natural tendency into the moral and disciplined impulse.

> Therefore, the responsibility for anti-Semitism is, in the last analysis, to be laid upon those who are the moral leaders

> of the Western World, who shape its belief, quicken its conscience, guide its sympathies, and train its charities.[82]

Thus, he regarded anti-Semitism fundamentally a Christian problem. His view was that anti-Semitism was Christendom's disgrace, because it loudly proclaimed its moral failure.

Schulman made use of every opportunity to speak forthrightly on the subject of anti-Semitism. In an historical period during which anti-Semitism was attaining new heights of populist credibility, he seized many opportunities to criticize popular literary works and widely-read authors for their unsympathetic views to the Jewish religion. Several of his clearly articulated reviews of contemporary popular literature were published and attained for him great notoriety in scholarly circles. Chief among these reviews was his "Review of Werner Sombart's Opinions of Jews and Judaism in his The Jews and the Economic Life." Schulman countered Sombart's variety of charges in an attempt to discredit his scientific credentials and to expose the base hatred that motivated him to publish such views. He exposed the author's racial antipathy displayed in Sombart's theory that Jewish "qualities" were transmitted through blood. He took a similar approach in his critique "Chamberlain's Foundations of the Nineteenth Century and the Claims of Judaism" which was published in the Jewish Quarterly Review, volume 5. Again he attempted to discredit the author,

Houston Stewart Chamberlain, as an historian, in his primary focus on the centrality of the German race and his unhistoric approach of structuring his history around a single idea - racial supremacy of one race over others. Additionally, Schulman also reviewed what he regarded as anti-Semitic works such as H.G. Wells' Mr. Britling Sees It Through, and Gilbert Chesterton's The New Jerusalem. In every review, Schulman undertakes a thorough analysis of the author's motivations, prejudices, contradictions, and inconsistencies. Schulman's sweeping critiques gained for him much respect in scholarly circles and supported his reputation for a critical approach and for fine scholarly abilities and insights. It is of particular interest that he seemed to combine this talent and expertise in the scholarly realm with an extraordinary ability to communicate many of the same ideas on the pulpit, in the more popular realm.

Schulman did not differentiate between ancient and modern anti-Semitism. In his analysis, the underlying premises of anti-Jewish thought had not changed in the many centuries since it first began. "Anti-Semitism simply takes an old thing, as old as the existence of human life, the antipathy of one tribe against another, and wants it to flourish in the broad daylight of the Twentieth Century."[83] More specifically, Schulman held that the fundamental premises of anti-Semitism encompassed a three-fold foundation " . . ..of race-hatred, mob-tyranny, and religious

bigotry--an unholy trinity."[84] Schulman asserted that whenever any degree of anti-Semitism was to be found, the underlying assumption was to be one or a combination of these three premises. In the modern American variety of anti-Semitism, race hatred manifested itself in the notion that a state should be made up of people of the same blood, based on a belief in the incompatibility between people of different racial origins. Such a belief was that extension of the ancient tribal antipathy, a rejection of the American ideal of citizenship, and Schulman argued, the foundation of tribal nationalism. Mob-tyranny, the second underlying premise of anti-Semitism, displayed itself in the belief that the minority has no rights as against the majority. In its most extreme form, the minority would be denied the right to live. In a less extreme manifestation, this tyranny of the majority was evident in the practice of magnification of the minority's faults along with diminishing their virtues. Schulman would point to the widespread caricature of the Jew as the illustration of such tyranny. Finally, the premise of religious bigotry was evident in the belief that the religion and culture of a land must be a unity, that spiritual life cannot include individuality or differentiation.[85] In the many cases when he would analyze a book or charge a person with anti-Semitism, Schulman would inevitably attempt to support his views with one or more

of the three premises which he believed served as the root of the problem. His disdain of anti-Semitism was more than a Jew merely defending his people and beliefs. For Schulman saw in anti-Semitism the union of two abhorrent ideas: the racial prejudice of nationalism and the religious prejudice of bigotry. Each of these prejudices seemed to him to be utterly incompatible with the American democratic values that he so cherished. Any rejection of such values was for him, immoral, and a negation of the near-holy idea of democracy which America best embodied.

After thoroughly analyzing the motivations for an anti-Semitic attitude, Schulman would move from the intellectual enterprise to the emotional aspect of response. He held strongly that many anti-Semitic charges were based on deep non-rational causes in the speaker and therefore, it was impossible to satisfy the anti-Semite, nor should the Jewish response attempt to. Yet, it was Schulman's firm conviction that every cry of anti-Semitism did demand a response, and the tone of such a reply should reverberate with boldness and pride. For Schulman, an anti-Semitic attack was an attack on American ideals, and as an American Jew, every anti-Semitic challenge should be squarely countered with ". . . an attitude of mind and a courage of heart, worthy of our great holy heritage as upholders of a religion . . . And we must face the insidious foe with a fearlessness worthy of American freemen."[86]

He counselled that the Jewish response should not be timid nor contemptible, nor should such an anti-Semitic charge embitter the Jew nor make him pessimistic. Instead, he advised a response that demonstrated optimism and joy in being part of the American heritage. For him, the need to respond was an imperative, for ". . . in warding off from ourselves the cowardly blows aimed at us, we are at the same time, protecting the integrity of the American spirit and the humanitarian character of American institutions."[87] Ultimately, he believed that the good sense of the American people would recognize such anti-Jewish attacks as a veneer of attacks against American ideals.

> We meet this thing with confidence in the intelligence and good-will of the American people. All we need is to warn America against the treason to its spirit, which misguided men are undertaking to foster. We can rest assured in the common sense and fair play of Americans.[88]

Schulman also encouraged a proactive response in addition to the reactive reply, urging that Jewry undertake a serious effort to educate itself and attempt to arrive at a clear conception of what the Jew stands for in the world. He argued that if such a fundamental conception were clear, the religion itself would be strengthened, and thereby increase the extent and depth of Jewish moral influence.[89]

Two Jewish responses to anti-Semitism which Schulman deplored were the assimilationist and the Jewish nationalists' reactions. He described the assimilation reaction as "weak-kneed, . . . (desiring) to sell their birthright for a mess of pottage."[90] He had no sympathy for such an approach nor did he countenance the Jewish nationalistic reaction to anti-Semitism. He charged that the Zionist meets the anti-Semite on his ground, taking up the same kind of argument for different ends.

> He says to the anti-Semite practically, 'You are right, I belong to a race that can never completely cooperate with you in perfect harmony. I have a blood that is so different from your Gentile blood, and for me, too, blood and soil go together.' . . . If the assimilationist party advises spiritual suicide, this party advises destructive self-isolation from Western civilization and thoroughly misunderstands the trend in Jewish history.[91]

Indeed, Schulman did regard this Jewish nationalism as an attack on the same American vision which anti-Semitism sought to undermine. As such his criticism of that response was perhaps more vehement than the attack on the alternatively perilous assimilationist attitude. Indeed, when Chesterton's book The New Jerusalem was published, Schulman offered his review and critique of the work. In response to Chesterton's claim of being a Zionist, Schulman insisted that ". . . one of the reasons why I am not a Zionist, is because I have always felt that Zionism would coax from every hole, the anti-Semitic serpent . . ."[92] Of course,

his rejection of Zionism stemmed from a variety of other causes which are examined in Chapter III.

His thorough devotion to American democracy and its ideals had a far reaching influence on Schulman's thought and world-view. His general view of the world with his belief in the inevitability of progress was perhaps tested most completely in the chaotic international events that occurred during his career which spanned two world wars and the near-genocide of his people. And it was this belief in progress through American democracy that served as his anchor of hope and faith during the tumultuous world events through which he lived. This source of hope colored his thought on the subject of nationalism and its manifestations in the two world wars. As can be imagined, Schulman harbored no love nor even any sympathy for nationalistic ideals which celebrated the value of racial origin. Schulman would caution his congregants not to become caught up in the celebration of any kind of nationalism (Jewish or European), for he insisted that democracy, based on the rights of the individual was a

> . . . larger and more inclusive conception than racial nationality. The Jew must be a champion of democracy. He must stand for the MODERN State. And the modern state is based on the rights of men.[93]

Democracy represented the highest form of government to him; yet even more than a type of government, democracy was the best vehicle to progress and to education as

the ultimate goal for humankind. The first step in this long and slow process of the education of humanity, was the cessation of the racial chauvinism found in nationalism. "The education of men, so that they recognize their common humanity, is the goal of a perfect civilization. It is by emphasizing our humanity and minimizing our racial differences, that men learn to live and work together."[94] Schulman firmly believed that the chief loyalty for any person was loyalty to the highest ideals of humanity. The nationalism which he believed ran rampant in Europe overlooked such a universal outlook, and instead inflicted great damage on human rights. As such, it was a step backwards in the upward process of human progress, moving closer to the ancient tribal racialism than to the ultimate union of all peoples and races based on a shared recognition of the rights and dignity of humankind.

> There is no justification ever for the sacrifice of right and justice to any loyalty to race, or class, or caste, or corporation, or union, or whatever be the nature of group interest. Above all loyalties, transcending them all, stands the loyalty to the highest ideals of humanity . . . a man should judge himself, govern his conduct, and be judged by the world entirely by the highest duties of truth and strict justice and a humanitarian sympathy which o'erleaps the distinction of race or creed, or any interest which unites men in groups.[95]

Not only did the racial intolerance inherent in nationalism hinder human progress, Schulman believed that such beliefs comprised the negation of religion itself.

The triumphalistic attitude that accompanied many nationalistic movements celebrated racial or ethnic isolation and not universal cooperation or the hope for unity. As such, Schulman insisted that racial nationalism negated the essence of the religious spirit.

> A world divided into tribes, separated by irremovable barriers, a world lastingly committed to the fatalism of the blood, a world which no longer speaks of the possibilities of the human spirit in the individual, which has no confidence in the dignity and ideal possibilities of man, in the effects of education, in the influence of free institutions--such a world cannot be said to have religion . . . Racial intolerance means the overthrowing of both the Jewish and Christian conceptions of man. There is no possible harmony between pride of race, when used as the basis of prejudice, and the ideal of humanity . . .[96]

Schulman did not attribute full responsibility for religion's ineffectiveness to racial nationalism. He placed partial blame on Western religion, itself, for its inability to transmit effectively its religious message to its adherants. Although such an indictment was perhaps difficult for him as a religious leader, it reflects his ability to critically appraise problems, even at the risk of self-criticism. He spoke of the world as having lost faith in itself and in its ideals:

> That such a calamity could come to the Western world was the proof that religion, professed conventionally, was at best, skin deep. It did not influence the vital thinking of men. It had nothing in common with the ambitions which determined their

> daily lives. It had not permeated the national spirit of the leading peoples of the Western world. Certainly not a religion that took seriously the doctrine of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of men, taught equally by Judaism and Christianity.[97]

As Schulman considered racial nationalism the antithesis of religion, democracy, and progress, it is not surprising that he considered it to be a primary cause for the ills that afflicted the world. So destructive did he believe the glorification of racial and/or national pride that he pointed to such unrestrained fervor as responsible, in large measure, for World War I. The spirit of racial chauvinism, repulsive to him, he described as ". . . one of the deepest causes for the world-war. It has been the main factor in the perpetuation of the tragic aftermath of the war."[98] He accused many of the nations of making themselves into idols of worship. Even before America entered the war, Schulman's analysis of the underlying causes prompted him to discourage America's entry into the primarily European conflict. He cautioned that in entering the conflict, America risked making a radical shift away from its humanitarian, democratic interests toward the undesirable European racial and/or national distinctions among people. Illustrating this, he pointed to the differences in citizenship laws. Only days before America's entry into the war he stated "I would rather cherish the political isolation and spiritual individuality of America. Humanity will have much to

lose and little to gain from America's accustoming itself to the European point of view."[99] Even on the eve of World War II some quarter century later, Schulman continued to find the glorification of racial nationalism as the root of the world's great problems. He asserted that:

> All the world's troubles come--not only the troubles of the Jew--from the fact that human beings are not thought of as human beings but are classified according to their so-called racial origin. All our troubles come from the fact that the claim is made that great groups of certain blood have a right to monopolize some part of the earth and exclude from their land those who differ in blood from the majority.[100]

As a believer in the inevitability of human progress, Schulman's career spanned historical events and crises that served as the greatest tests to such a belief. Having seen the ravages of World War I, the great post-war Depression, World War II and the most devastating crisis of the Nazi genocide to European Jewry, it is quite remarkable that he was left with any hope and faith in the principles of democracy, of religion, and of human progress. Yet, he did retain such faith, clinging to them with great vigor and persistence. Such a faith was not unrealistic optimism, blind to the obvious crises surrounding the contemporary world. Schulman was most aware of these events, quick to offer his analysis of the causes. He spoke directly to the problems, referring often in the years following World War I to the "world's sickness." He

would outline the causes as racial nationalism, unrestrained materialism, and the loss of faith in values and in religion, itself. He lamented the disillusionment, preaching that the world simply could not learn from its own mistakes: "To speak with the Prophet, it (the world) tends to go back, like the drunken man, to his own vomit."[101] Yet he would not abandon the fundamental notion of progress which served as a philosophical and inspirational underpinning of his career's message. In the depths of disillusionment following the post World War I hopes, Schulman would admit that human progress is slow, but nonetheless, there is progress:

> We actually believed that the motives of men would change with the signing of a peace treaty. I think that there has been much disillusionment. I think we realize that humanity's progress is necessarily slow, that the ideals of peace cannot be artificially established. If realized at all, they will be the consummation of man's complete education.[102]

Yet despite the despair and the ease with which one could abandon any hope in humanity's progress, Schulman clung to his tenacious optimism, which he believed was the model that the Jew could offer the world. Although the world was sick, it was still young and there was every reason to work toward the goals of humanity's union, through those same avenues which Schulman had proclaimed throughout his career: pluralism of religion in an environment of democratic principles, the celebration of human dignity

and equality, and the burial of destructive nationalistic racialism. In short, Schulman continued to place the greatest faith in America as the sole model of the path to human progress. Indeed, he had incorporated his belief in America into his values system with a passion and an unshakable faith of religious fervor. It had become for him a foundation of his message and its hope: ". . . I believe in America, God's word to humanity, God's revelation through political democracy."[103]

## CHAPTER III

## SAMUEL SCHULMAN, ISRAEL AND ZIONISM

> If one asked me what are the fundamental beliefs which have dominated your own spiritual life, which have been the innermost convictions of your own heart, which have inspired your message to men, I would say: I believe in God, I believe in Israel, His servant, on behalf of mankind, and I believe in America, God's word to humanity, God's revelation through political democracy.[104]

Although Schulman felt that the Jew was completely at home in America, the Jew's status throughout the world was much less certain. Confronted by this problem, as well as the consuming question of Jewish self-definition, Schulman energetically focused on the considerable issue of articulating a philosophy of Judaism and of the Jewish people, Israel. Ever since the ghetto walls had tumbled in the Emancipation, much of the Jewish world had been struggling to achieve some understanding of Israel in relationship to the world. With the answers no longer provided, a long and difficult battle ensued in the Jewish world over the nature of Israel and its place in the larger world. Schulman entered into this struggle for self-definition with characteristic vigor and forcefulness, articulating his view of Israel's fundamental religious nature. While it is impossible to separate the two thoroughly interrelated issues of Zionism and his conception of Israel,

this chapter attempts to undertake this somewhat artificial separation of this one important philosophical tapestry, for the purpose of a detailed examination of Schulman's thought. In particular, like the theistic God-centered focus which permeated nearly every aspect of his theology, so too, does one note a strong influence of God-centered principles in his view of Israel. Conversely, the strong, emphatic positions which he articulated concerning Zionism and the nature of Israel color a large part of his theology. Indeed, among the 100 plus self-designated most important sermons and addresses of his career, over eighty (80) contain at least some reference or discussion of Zionism, Palestine, or his conception of Israel. In an era of heated debate and discussion of issues which had the nature of Israel at their very core, Schulman became absorbed with the fundamental question of Israel's nature, touching nearly every facet of his work. These raging issues such as Zionism and the corresponding conception of Judaism which it evoked provided Schulman with ample opportunity to develop, clarify, and articulate his views on Israel. Thus, to understand his notion of Israel, we examine his philosophy of Judaism, his position on mixed marriage, and his views of Zionism and Palestine.

Any careful analysis of Schulman's understanding of the nature of Judaism and of Israel would center on the most striking characteristic of his consistency. During

a career which spanned such monumental and stunning Jewish events as the first Basle Conference, World War I, increase of anti-Semitism, the Balfour Declaration, World War II, the Holocaust and the establishment of modern Israel, such a consistency with which Schulman persisted in the rapidly shifting sands of the Jewish world is deemed even more remarkable! In summarizing the problem with which he, and any other Jewish leader of the time, struggled, he pointed out the ongoing tension between peoplehood and religion that demanded some kind of resolution.

> The function of the (Jewish) name is unique and incomparable. It has a two-fold significance. On the one hand, it designates membership in a historic community of unbroken continuity. On the other hand, it connotes religious allegiance . . . There has been a perfect fusion of historical descent and personal faith. Such a fusion makes our religion unique.[105]

For Schulman, his resolution of this vital issue came in his insistence that Israel was primarily of a religious nature. In characteristic fashion, he wasted no words, nor did he step delicately in his outspoken, impassioned fervor that the essence of Judaism and of Israel was first and foremost, religion. Even early in his career, Schulman was already instructing that "the Jewish soul is religion and nothing else."[106] In his opposition to

other conceptions of Judaism, he echoed similar ideas from the pulpit. As the claims of what he called racial and national conceptions of Judaism heightened in intensity, so too did his defense of a "pure" Judaism that centered in religion. He suggested that even the name of "Israel" itself demonstrated the fundamental religious foundation and the religious enterprise of the Jew:

> I claim that the very word 'Israel' is itself already a commitment to the thought that it is a religious group primarily and essentially . . . the word 'Israel' is the culmination and crown of the whole development. It is the final mintage of the matured thought of Israel's mind upon what it considers itself to be. It is primarily and essentially called upon to witness to and proclaim the unity of God and to give the world the example of the love of Him and His ways in which we are to walk.[107]

In his spirited defense of his religious conception of Israel, he attempted to show that any other philosophy of Israel was contrary to the values of Judaism. He would not allow for any view of Israel that did not place itself squarely and surely on the singular dimension of religion. Thus we see the important influence of his God-centered theology on his conception of Israel: "The whole significance of Israel from beginning to end is in its relation to God. Therefore, an irreligious Israel is to me a contradiction in terms."[108] Even in his celebrated "Statement of Principles" which he hoped the Central Conference of American Rabbis would adopt as its own, he firmly states:

"Without religion Israel ceases to be itself."[109] Schulman decried the view of Israel primarily as a people as unauthentic, and asserted that such a belief that negated God ". . . empties Israel of its historic significance and reduces loyalty to the martyred servant of God to the level of a primitive tribal solidarity."[110] While other Jews were beginning to experiment with notions of Judaism as a civilization, or Judaism as a nation (Zionism), Schulman tenaciously responded that they simply misunderstood the very essence of Israel. If their protests intensified, so did his response. He had so internalized this view of Israel and of Judaism, that he seemed unable to understand any alternative approach. Thus, his responses to the challenges of Jewish nationalism or Jewish culture echoed not merely an intellectual reply, but an emotional fervor that few could match:

> A Judaism without religion as its inspiring soul, is a mutilated thing. It has garbed itself in borrowed costume. A Judaism that calls itself a 'civilization' or a 'culture' and is not clearly conscious of its being above all, a teaching given by God to men for their education, is self-deluding, is deceived itself and is misleading others.[111]

In the verbal war of attrition that existed between Schulman as the spokesman for Judaism as a religion and other conceptions of Israel, he attempted to demonstrate their inauthenticity and invalidity by placing such non-religious conceptions outside the mainstream of Jewish history. While Schulman did not deny the fundamental

notion of the Jewish people, he rejected the supremacy of that idea and the subordination of religion and God. He called such a view "racial Judaism," and instructed that it was important for its purpose, but not to be

> . . . glorified on its own account. And the definite purpose of the Jewish racial historic solidarity, that which has inspired it, and that which has made it a unique thing in history . . . is the loyalty to the God of Israel . . .[112]

Schulman insisted that there was no Jewish culture nor a Jewish civilization historically, but rather, a Jewish spirit which is most pure in the religious realm. He challenged this racial view of Israel as historically invalid: "As far as I know the history of my people, there did not exist any particular culture for our people except insofar as it was created and profoundly influenced by religion."[113] Similarly, Schulman also attempted to discredit a nationalistic or Zionist view of Israel by demonstrating its historical invalidity. He often asserted that the Maccabees did not fight for national independence nor would the people of Israel have risen for the mere idea of self-governance; rather, only when Israel's religion was threatened did it revolt and make itself willing to give their lives for the religious cause.[114] Journeying back even further in history to the very paradigm of Judaism, the Prophets, Schulman doggedly insisted that those who held a nationalistic conception only sought to:

> . . . make of Israel an ordinary people, with ordinary aims and ambitions, with ordinary limitations . . . Political nationality is, in my opinion, not the kernal of Jewish consciousness. So to hold, is in fact to misinterpret Jewish history. The idea in Israel was always greater than mere nationality. The vision of prophet always transcended the confines of Palestine.[115]

Concerning the international fraternity of Jews, Schulman persisted in his advocation of a religious Israel. Despite the various manifestations of religious thought and practice the world over, he held that the only binding tie for all Jews was religion. "Religion is the dominant factor of Jewish consciousness and the substance of Israel's peoplehood."[116] Contrasting the many cultures in which Jews live and the various customs that different Jews have taken in as their own, he attempted to show that the Falashan Jew had little in common with the American Jew, with the exception of a shared belief in the Jewish God and fundamental Jewish religious values:

> . . . here is Israel, scattered all over the world, made up of people who speak different languages, made up of people who are of different physical types, even differing in color . . . What they have in common is the fact that mornings and evenings they say, or ought to say: Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One. There is nothing else that binds them.[117]

As a result of this conviction, Schulman opposed attempts to organize Jews along the lines of peoplehood, and not religion. He desired for a person to consciously

affirm their Jewish birthright through the means of synagogue affiliation, the only way to confirm the religious view of Israel. He would not countenance any organization of Jews to speak on their behalf to the non-Jewish public, except along the lines of a religious union.

> If we are a religion, then the accident of race, of birth, that makes a man or woman a member of the Jewish body is not the one that should be recognized in Jewish organization. Only the conscious and voluntary acceptance of Jewish inheritance, which is implied in membership in the Synagogue.[118]

When challenged that this conception of Judaism was a philosophy of exclusion, reading the atheistic or agnostic Jew out of the community, Schulman retorted that such a Jew who even aggressively opposed Judaism as a religion, was nonetheless, considered as a "potential Jew." He countered that Israel is a family religion, and therefore one who is born a Jew is potentially a child of spiritual Israel. All that was left was the conscious acceptance of his spiritual birthright to realize that inherited potential.[119]

It is clear, then, that beyond his deep conviction of Judaism as a religion, he recognized Jewry, as well. He acknowledged the bond that existed between Jews, regardless of religious conviction, with its sense of fraternity, mutual support and obligation. Such a recognition, however, was due to the essence of religion as

Israel's ideal at the forefront of the Jew's heart. If a special tie bound one Jew to another, that bond of unity was cemented by Israel's religion and its religious purpose in the world. Thus, in the opposing tension of religion and peoplehood, Schulman did not negate the idea of peoplehood, but rather, subordinated it to the central purpose of religion. As such, he fits comfortably into Israel Bettan's description of classical Reform leaders: ". . . they viewed Judaism not as a denominational creed but as the religious culture of a consecrated people."[120] Israel's peoplehood was framed by its divine consecration to its unique destiny. Schulman articulated this view from the earliest point in his career and with great consistency, firmly maintaining that conviction until his death. In the many utterances on this subject throughout his long and distinguished career, he sounds almost like a broken record, embellishing with only minor added notes along the way, but always echoing the same chorus. His conception of Israel did not reject, but merely subordinated the idea of peoplehood. Most specifically, he simply would not tolerate the negation of Israel's distinctive nature:

> I will never admit that Israel is a Goy like other Goyim, a nation like other nations; that Israel is a secular nation of which religion may or may not be an incident. For me, Israel is a Holy people, consecrated by God.[121]

He quite clearly described the difficulty in arriving at a conception of Israel, with its fusion of religion and descent defying easy categorization. He began to use the phrase "historic religious community" to describe Israel's uniqueness as a people, stating that: ". . . Judaism is neither a national nor a racial religion. Judaism is a universal religion, carried in history by a distinct, historic religious community, the household of Israel, to which everyone is welcome."[122] With such a unique synthesis of descent and religion, of the religious character of the peoplehood of Israel, there was a need for fitting terminology to describe this fusion. In 1906, Schulman's study of Midrash uncovered the phrase "Keneseth Israel" to describe Israel's new structure following the destruction of the Second Jewish Commonwealth. Schulman claimed that he was the first to discern in this phrase the clear rabbinic recognition that Israel had undergone a radical change from nation to Synagogue, or Ecclesia. He claimed that the Midrashic use of this term represented the new understanding that Israel had ceased to be an ordinary people and had become a congregation or a religious community.[123] Schulman thus enthusiastically promulgated the revitalization of the term "Keneseth Israel" to refer to the religious conception of Israel which he held so dear. "Schulman fostered the concept throughout his lifetime, infusing it with all the scholarship and warmth

that were characteristic of him, but it never received general acceptance."[124] He claimed with great pride that he was the first to introduce the phrase, but Isaac Leeser had already referred to it nearly a half-century earlier.[125] More than providing needed terminology, however, the phrase "Keneseth Israel" furnished Schulman's religious conception of Israel with the strength of an historic foundation. It enabled him to assert that the religious understanding was authentic, and therefore, genuine and correct. He often referred to the unique transformation which Israel underwent with the Roman conquest and subsequent exile which led it to a new, distinctive self perception:

> In the fullness of time there even came to be coined a new character of the community. The transformation of Israel as an historic group from an ordinary people, with ordinary ambition that could be expressed politically, into a community that feels the essence of its being in fidelity to a particular kind of religion, was expressed in the new name given to the community.[126]

Schulman firmly believed that his view of Israel as a religious community, subordinating peoplehood to the insistence on the religious character of its identity, was backed by two thousand years of history and scholarship. He believed that with such a radical transformation, Israel had "transcended itself."[127] Therefore, any attempt to promote another non-religious conception, particularly Zionism, was in effect, an historical regression,

negating the spiritual progress that had already been accomplished. In addition, this religious view of Israel was critical because woven into it was the theological principle of "the mission of Israel" and divine election (discussed in Chapter IV). Clearly his view of Israel carried a profound impact on his theology, as did his theology influence his view of Israel. So many issues were inextricably bound togehter. Any rival view, therefore, received no tolerance from him, for it was a direct challenge to several fundamental principles of his thought.

Imbued with this historical foundation and a theological underpinning, Schulman viewed his conception of Israel with deep conviction. For him, it was no mere approach or personal opinion, but the true and valid perception justified by time and intellect. So important did his view of Israel become by the end of his career, that the controversy of religious or national conception of Israel superceded any other issue. He began minimizing religious differences between the Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform camps (discussed in Chapter IV) and called the controversy concerning the nature of Israel ". . . the most important cleavage in Jewish thinking."[128] Viewing his strong feelings with such a perspective gives us greater understanding of his consuming preoccupation with the religious nature of Israel throughout his life.

Schulman's religious view of Judaism was more than an intellectual dogma, for beyond its influence on his theology, his deep conviction exerted a primary influence on his religious and rabbinic practice. Given his disdain for racial and national conceptions of Israel, the logical consequences of the belief in Judaism's religious essence manifested itself in two areas to which Schulman devoted much thought and energy: mixed marriage and Zionism. Examining first the rejection of the racial view, it becomes clear why he was always an opponent of sanctioning a marriage between a Jew and a non-Jew. Schulman's great interest in this subject led him to author the paper "Mixed Marriages in their Relation to the Jewish Religion," presented to the Central Conference of American Rabbis in 1909. In that important work, he distinguished between a mixed marriage, as between two people of two differing religions, and an intermarriage, between people of two different races or tribes. Therefore, he asserted the synagogue never opposed intermarriage, but shunned only mixed marriage. His opposition to mixed marriage stemmed from a concern for the marriage itself, as well as a concern for Israel and Judaism. His objection was purely on religious grounds, not racial. Schulman cautioned that a mixed marriage detracts from the ". . . unity of the home, which we hold can only be ideally maintained upon the basis of a perfect unity of souls. The proper

rearing of children can only be based upon a perfect unity and harmony of religious faith."[129] He held that because such a mixed marriage could take place legally in a civil ceremony, the proper role of religion was to jealously uphold the ideal:

> We take high ground, therefore, and refuse to consecrate mixed marriages because they do not fulfill the conditions which the religious teacher in Judaism should recognize as indispensable for an ideal union. And as union can take place legally under the aegis of the State law, where RELIGION speaks at all, about marriage, it certainly should speak to men from the point of view of the ideal. Otherwise it has nothing to say.[130]

In addition to concern for unity of the home, Schulman also opposed mixed marriage based on the potential danger to the integrity of Judaism:

> . . . as Judaism is a minority religion, if the Synagogue sanctified marriage between a Jewish man or woman and those of the non-Jewish faith, then according to the law of attraction, which makes the minority gravitate towards the majority, such mixed marriages would lead in a few generations to destruction of Israel as an historic religious community. To safeguard the home and to perpetuate Israel as the witness to God in history, mixed marriages cannot be sanctioned by Judaism.[131]

But because Schulman's opposition rested solely on religious grounds, he was quick to call for encouragement of conversion, and for changes to be made in the conversion ceremony itself, making it more impressive. Such a call only strengthened the religious nature of his objection and removed any suspicion that racial motivations were at work, for it allowed for the acceptance of non-Jews into Judaism,

and subsequently, as a new Jew, their marriage to their Jewish spouse. Removing the impediments of disharmony of the home and weakening of Israel, such a marriage would then be considered a marriage between two Jews.[132] So deeply did Schulman hold his conviction against intermarriage, that his rabbinic practice mirrored his thought. Even after thirty-five years in the rabbinate, he stated publicly that he had never once officiated at a mixed marriage, and moreover, that he had made few conversions to Judaism due to his strict investigation of candidates and thorough instruction of Judaism.[133] Even earlier in his career, however, Schulman articulated his firm conviction in his proposed resolution before the Central Conference that

> a Rabbi ought not to officiate between a marriage between a Jew or Jewess and a person professing a religion other than Judaism, inasmuch as such mixed marriage is prohibited by the Jewish religion and would tend to disintegrate the religion of Israel.

When a substitute resolution of a softer tone prevailed declaring that "mixed marriages are contrary to the tradition of the Jewish religion and should therefore be discouraged by the American Rabbinate," Schulman was most disappointed.[134] But clearly, through his scholarly presentation and the proposed resolution, Schulman had laid a critical groundwork for a difficult and complex issue. So forceful was that foundation, that it endured

as the Central Conference's position for nearly sixty-five years until a new resolution was adopted in 1973. As this is still a burning issue for rabbis and lay persons even today, Schulman's early work on the subject may be viewed as a valuable tool. His anticipation of many issues which arise in the contemporary discussion of mixed marriage is a real tribute to his full grasp of a difficult topic, as well as most instructive to those considering the subject even seventy-five years later.

Noting the strength of Schulman's view of Israel as a religious community, it is not surprising that he takes his place alongside other classical Reformers in a stand against Zionism. He viewed Zionism, with its racial/national emphasis as antithetical to everything in which he believed philosophically concerning the nature of Israel, and theologically, as well. Schulman's opposition was made evident from the earliest days of his career, until his death. He publicly opposed such a national conception of Israel from the first Zionist Congress in Basle in 1897. Although we have no record of the text, we know that even a year earlier, Schulman stated publicly in a sermon his disavowal of the early Zionist (pre-Herzlian) theories, countering them with the classical Reform conception of Israel as a religion and not a nationality.[135] He was proud of his early opposition to Zionism, calling attention to his early vision in later years. Schulman's rejection

of the principles of Zionism as contrary to the religious spirit of Judaism were consistent throughout the entire half decade of his rabbinate. He perceived himself as the unchanging stable opponent while many other Jewish leaders were vacillating in their views.[136] Schulman believed that ". . . no man in the country more than I, has been consistently opposed to the whole philosophy of Jewish Nationalism."[137] Moreover, he viewed himself not merely as the most consistent opponent, but one of the more outspoken and dedicated leaders to fight the menace of Zionism and its divergent philosophy:

> It seems to me that I am the only one in the East, even of all the Reform Rabbis, that is aggressively fighting Nationalism. And for that matter, I busy myself with it more than any other man in the country. That is because I have seen the spirit of this movement eighteen years ago when it started, and many of the phenomena that have at least come to the front, I predicted, and in spirit, anticipated.[138]

At times, Schulman felt that he was the only fighter in a very lonely battle against Zionism, especially in the East and in New York City where Zionism was strong. His feeling of isolation in the anti-Zionist polemic is best revealed in his opposition to the Eastern Council of Reform Rabbis (which formed during his tenure as Central Conference of American Rabbis President), in his antipathy to Zionist spokesman Stephen S. Wise, and in his personal correspondence. Although at times such perceptions of isolation may have frustrated him, Schulman was not deterred

from his continued outspoken opposition to Zionism. Perhaps such isolation served to heighten his fervor and the enormous time and energy which he dedicated to this task. And of course, his long-standing polemic against Zionism was characteristically charged with caustic analysis and emotion-laden conviction. Schulman was indeed fearless in his polemic, even when such forceful opposition entailed sacrifice. Nathan Straus, an ardent Zionist and prominent member of Schulman's congregation resigned from Beth-El, dramatically walking out of the Synagogue in protest over Schulman's vigorous attacks on Zionism.[139] Some years later, his son Nathan Straus, Jr. tendered his resignation over the same issue, but later withdrew it after reconsideration.[140] Although his views brought upon him criticism, sacrifice, and isolation, Schulman continued his polemic undaunted, even at his career's end, when the State of Israel was established and the Zionist hope fulfilled.

Schulman was indeed, driven in his energetic and forceful opposition to Zionism. His rejection of this philosophy of Israel was based in his strong sense of Americanism and philosophy of Judaism already discussed. Like many classical Reformers who rejected Zionism, Schulman was disturbed by Zionism's challenge to his sense of Americanism. Especially in his early career, Schulman's polemic usually contained some reference to

Jews as a religious group with no national aspirations. "We look upon our Judaism as a religion and not as a nationality. The Jew is the loyal and patriotic citizen of the community in which he lives."[141] Such a disclaimer points to his concern that in the Zionist argument, non-Jews would look upon Jews as unpatriotic and perhaps, disloyal. Nothing seemed so bitter a condemnation to Schulman than the taint of being a disloyal American. In part, his opposition was based on the radical change a Jewish state might make in the status of Jews throughout the world, including America. "Non-Zionists feel that with the clapping of nationality on the Jews of the world, a hyphen will be clapped on American Jews, English Jews, French Jews, etc."[142] In some measure, Schulman feared that the existence of a Jewish nation would alter the American Jew's American emphasis and call his Americanism into question.

In addition, Schulman cautioned that Zionism would reverse the great work of emancipation for which modern Jewry, and particularly Reform Judaism, had struggled valiantly. As the quintessential Reformer who viewed Israel as a religious community with a holy mission, it is only logical that he would assert on a number of occasions that

> Reform Judaism and Zionism are simply incompatible. Zionism and nationalism, arising in the second half of the 19th century, is a deliberate rejection of the

> ideals that arose in Germany in the first half of the 19th century.[143]

For him, Zionism was the very contradiction of the emancipated modern Jew, best articulated in Reform Judaism. He likened its hope for a national state to the desire to turn modernity aside and return to the darkness of the ghetto:

> Now it may seem bombastic to you, but I hold that if our Conference should commit itself to Nationalism or Zionism, it would sound the death-knell of Reform Judaism . . . To my mind Nationalism . . . is a rejection of the aspirations of the modern Jew. It is true, our people can continue to have beautiful temples and circumcised prayer books. They can permit themselves to eat and to drink what they like. But if, in all seriousness, they talk of themselves as a nation in exile and without a home, longing to re-establish their nationality in Palestine, they have ceased to be modern Jews and have spiritually rebuilt the ghetto.[144]

Consistent with his view of the utter incompatibility of Zionism and Reform, Schulman spearheaded many of the attempts to have the Central Conference go on record in its opposition to Jewish nationalism. One may clearly understand Schulman's motivation for such fierce, even consuming opposition to Zionism merely in his desire to protect what he perceived as an attack on his beloved foundation of America and Reform Judaism.

The primary reason, however, for Schulman's rejection of Zionism is found not in his understanding of America or of Reform Judaism, but rather in his conception of Israel as Keneseth Israel, a religious community.

Zionism, with its emphasis of Israel as a race or nation, simply represented a philosophical contrast to his religious ideal. The ideological gulf could not be bridged. Specifically, Zionism contradicted his views of Israel's historical progression, of Israel's mission, and of Israel's place in the world.

As Schulman subscribed to the idea that Israel had undergone a radical transformation at the time of the Roman Conquest, transcending nationality for a spiritual and religious essence, he thus viewed the desire to return to a Jewish nation as a regression in the wake of two millenia of Jewish development. He charged that the Zionists attempted to solve the complicated Jewish problem of definition and place in the world by a simplistic solution that turned its back on historical progress:

> The Jewish problem cannot be solved to-day, by any act of the Jew alone, nor by any political device, which would seek to restore ancient conditions. History never repeats itself. To take up the threads of Jewish life of two thousand years ago, when they became twisted and complicated by the dispersion of Israel to the ends of the earth, seems the simplest solution. But the simplest way, is not the way to the complete redemption of the Jew.[145]

He insisted that the simplicity of the Zionist solution was ". . . its own condemnation."[146] Instead, Schulman urged that the Jew should maintain individuality through the granting of complete freedom to the Jew, and a clearer self-definition of Jewish purpose, through Israel's mission.[147]

Schulman also maintained that the nationalist ideology of Zionism stood in direct contrast to the Mission of Israel concerning Jewish destiny. He cautioned that Zionism threatened to destroy the fabric of Israel's uniqueness, seeking to make it a nation like any other nation. In this sense, he looked upon Zionism as a complete assimilation to Western ideals, and therefore, dangerous for the future of Judaism.[148] Although he recognized that Zionism had served positively to strengthen Jewish identity among some Jews, he nonetheless cautioned of its assimilationist danger:

> It (Zionism) borrowed too much from the Western environment. It talks like a Western nationalist . . . Its weakness is just this very thing that, while it wants to strengthen the backbone of the Jewish consciousness, it has assimilated away the Jewish soul by making Israel a Goy like other Goyim, a nation like other nations.[149]

So distressed was he by the attempt to remake Israel in the secular light of other nations that he predicted a secular Jewish nation was doomed to failure. He confided that ". . . if I could conceive that a Jewish 'nation' would have come to be, as our secular Zionists in Palestine and in America want it, which would not live for God, but be as any other nation, it deserves to perish."[150] In addition to this fundamentally differing conception of a secular Israel, he rejected Zionism because it aimed to limit all Jews in the world to one nation. If such a

possibility existed, then there would be little hope for the fruition of Israel's Mission.

> . . . we say to the Neo-Nationalists--it is not our destiny, never was, and certainly cannot be today, to be a nation like other nations. Our destiny is a much more glorious task, a spiritual people that 'walketh alone and is not reckoned among the goyim, among the nations,' and therefore, can become part and parcel of all the nations of the world, teaching them and taught by them, contributing to their culture and receiving from their culture and civilization. . .[151]

Schulman believed that the realization of Zionist aspirations would weaken the essential universal motif in Judaism as best portrayed in the Mission ideal. He feared that a Jewish nation would shut out the larger view of international brotherhood and unity of humankind for which Judaism should always strive.[152] Summarizing his concern that Zionism was antithetical to Jewish destiny, he coined a phrase which even his adversaries came to accept as an accurate description. He spoke of the Zionist goal to make Jews "Ka-Goyim, like the nations," while the non-Zionists sought to maintain Jews "Ba-Goyim, among the nations." He insisted that paradoxically, the only way for Jews to carry out their sacred Mission was to be part of all the nations of the world:

> They (Zionists) want Israel to become, at this late date, a nation like other nations, which it never was. We want Israel to remain in the midst of the nations, as a great religious community, as an historic group, standing for ideas that transcend nationality, as a great spiritual power.[153]

Schulman believed that Zionism effectively stated that Jews were not at home throughout the world. Such a statement was a stirring challenge to the foundation of emancipation. It was a surrender to those people in the world who desired to banish the Jews from their country and as he saw it, a self-admission that Jews were not worthy of the equal rights for which they had struggled during the previous century. He asserted that "Israel needs no home-land, because Israel is a religious community whose homeland is the whole world."[154] If the Jew was to share fully equal status with the non-Jew, then the Keneseth Israel was as much at home in the world as the Christian Church. Schulman cautioned that Israel's historical position should serve as the best guide to its future mission, stating that the ". . . destiny of the Jew is not to run away from the non-Jewish environment, as the philosophy of Zionism would have it . . . The Jew must use his environment."[155] He insisted that Jewish energy should be devoted not to a call for separate existence, but for a campaign for the rights of Jews everywhere in the world to live fully equal lives. Only with the cessation of racial and religious prejudice would Israel be fully integrated into the nations of the world, enabled to accomplish the work of its Mission, giving world service:

> The modern Jew needs, above all, to rediscover his own soul. And he can solve his problem, and he must solve it, not in isolation in Palestine, but in creative work, in a friendly

> environment. And to make this environment friendly, two factors are necessary. Not only the Jewish spiritual renaissance, but above all, the world's fair and just treatment which shall release the energy for the rebirth of the Jewish spirit.[156]

Schulman's program for Jewish renewal and redemption would have the Jew remain ba-goyim, among the nations, with a campaign for full rights for all Jews to live anywhere in the world. Being emancipated from the need to justify his existence, the Jew would then be best equipped to undergo a spiritual renaissance and to fulfill his sacred task of service to the world.

Despite Schulman's abhorrence of the Zionist claims as the antipodal and misguided conception of Israel, nevertheless, Schulman was not unable to see some positive benefit arising from the Zionist movement. He recognized the idealism which the movement inspired and applauded it for its invigorating spirit. Then too, he was pleased about the positive effect on Hebrew literature and the rejuvenation of Hebrew as a living, spoken language that Zionism had evoked.[157]

But even more than idealism or Hebrew, Schulman's criticism of Zionism as a philosophy of Judaism ended when it came to practical matters of development of Palestine. Like many other classical Reform leaders who bitterly opposed Zionism, Schulman's sense of ahavat yisrael, the love of Jews, superceded his ideological objections. In simplifying

the non-Zionists' platform, it is easy to overlook this facet of their position. Many non-Zionists labored diligently for Palestine's development, so that persecuted Jews from other places in the world could be resettled there. Schulman was stung by the charge that the anti-Zionists did not sufficiently care for fellow Jews.

> Those who have maintained the philosophy of Judaism, as a religion, and have objected to a nationalistic interpretation of Jewish life, have had great injustice done to them. It has been made to appear that they do not love their people sufficiently. We resent such a charge. Let it be once and for all, understood, that we are not 'anti' anything. There is no such thing as anti-Zionism. No Jew is opposed to anything that will help Jews. . . No one objects to helping Jews in any place in the world.[158]

Although many non-Zionists eventually joined the cause of Palestinian development and settlement, particularly when room was made for them in the Jewish Agency in 1929, Schulman's support for practical work in Palestine began much earlier. He expressed his support publicly for resettlement of oppressed Jews in Palestine as early as 1914,[159] preceeding many other ardent non-Zionists by a decade! He praised the management of the Zionist organization for their enlistment of non-Zionist cooperation in Palestinian development.[160] As early as 1916, Schulman considered himself a consistent upholder of the practical work in Palestine. He displayed that sense of ahavat yisrael when he maintained:

> That Jews should be taken from lands of oppression and transplanted, if conditions permit, to Palestine, where they may live a freer, happier and more dignified life, is certainly a desideratum. And what Jews will do when they get there is their own concern. They need ask no advice from others. I believe in home rule . . .[161]

In addition to merely voicing approval of Palestinian development, Schulman even restrained his outspoken criticism of Zionism when he feared that such a public polemic might be harmful to the cause of settling persecuted Jews there. "My attitude has been not to put stumbling blocks on the road of my suffering brethren."[162] Schulman did not join the League of American Jews when it was forming in 1918 because unlike the British League, its program was based on criticism of Zionist philosophy without any plank for Palestinian development. He maintained that had the American League followed the British League's example, he would have become a member. In explanation of his refusal to join, he stated his preference for the British League because:

> . . . it went further and took a positive stand on the question of Palestine, which is to-day uppermost in men's minds and which cannot be evaded. It pledged itself to facilitate immigration to Palestine, to help the constructive work in Palestine, while it rejected the Jewish Nationalistic philosophy of Zionism.[163]

When the issue of the Balfour Declaration was made real by the San Remo Conference in 1920, Schulman authored the primarily non-Zionist Central Conference of American

Rabbis' response in its entirety. He clearly reiterated the belief that Israel's homeland was the world and the rejection of Zionist philosophy. Such a strenuous rejection of Zionism was coupled with a firm statement regarding practical development of Palestine:

> With confidence in the free institutions of Great Britain, we rejoice in and recognize the historic significance of such a Mandate for Palestine, in that it will offer the opportunity to some Jews who may desire to settle there, to go there, and to live full, free, and happy lives . . . Recognizing the opportunity which Palestine, under the Mandate of the British Empire will offer some Jews, the Conference reiterates now what it has said many times, that it is the duty of all Jews to contribute to the reconstruction of Palestine, insofar as Jews may place themselves there, and to make it a good place for them to live in.[164]

Schulman characterized his resolution as "not conceived in any spirit of the old aggressive anti-Zionism, but is a genuine desire to do something for Israel."[165] He perceived that he had disappointed some of his non-Zionist colleagues who might have thought he made too many concessions, but nonetheless, he was motivated by his excitement for the situation that confronted Israel.[166] Rising to his own defense as the result of a charge that he was fighting the national interests of the Jewish people in his criticism of Zionism, Schulman attempted to demonstrate still other examples of his restraint due to issues of practical development. He stated that he had been careful in his criticism of Zionism, lest he hurt those who wanted to go

to Palestine. For this reason alone he reiterated that: 1. he deliberately did not sign the petition of 43 Jews to the Versailles Conference opposing the granting of Palestine to the Jews; 2. he did not oppose the Congressional Resolution favoring the British Mandate of Palestine; 3. he played a part in the organization of the temporary Jewish Congress so that Jews could speak with one voice concerning their suffering fellow Jews; 4. he upheld the doctrine of home rule concerning the question of Hebrew language instruction in the Gymnasium of Palestine.[167] Schulman did indeed, restrain himself from taking certain public stands against Zionism only in the cases where he feared it might damage the important cause of immigration and development. He admitted that:

> I would not put myself in a position that would give the impression that I am opposed to the British Mandate for Palestine, with all the practical consequences of such mandate for Jews who want to, or who must go to Palestine.[168]

As a result of his deep conviction for practical development in Palestine, Schulman was assigned to the C.C.A.R. committee to discuss the Conference's ill-fated possible cooperation with the Palestine Development Council on the basis of development and immigration for Palestine.[169]

In later years, Schulman increased his active support for the development of Palestine for resettlement purposes. In 1929, he enthusiastically accepted his election to serve as one of the forty American members of the Council of the

Jewish Agency, representing the non-Zionist element of the new Agency.[170] In the decade preceeding World War II, Schulman's goals for colonization of Palestine increased in magnitude. Even while he continued to condemn the Zionist philosophy of Jewish life, he directed more energy and concern to resettlement of Jews. He claimed that this was the most crucial work to be done and that only with increased numbers could any hope or theory for Palestine be realized. Writing to Judah Magnes, he stated:

> I differ also in some measure with you, as to indifference to the number of Jews. I do not conceive of Palestine merely as a so-called 'spiritual centre.' I think it can become an important one if there is a sufficient number of Jews there. But my main interest in Palestine, though I do not underestimate its sentimental value and inspiration for Jews who live there, is in its availability as a country to which to transport Jews from other countries, so that they lead happier and freer lives. Colonization in Palestine, which has been going on for fifty years, will be a failure, in my opinion, unless at least half a million Jews are placed there.[171]

Schulman became increasingly impatient with the Zionist organizations for their insistence on ideology, and in his view, to the detriment of the primary need of colonization. He charged that the Zionist organization had become unrealistic. He dismissed the ideological concerns as subordinate to colonization.

> I am not so much interested in the words, 'homeland,' 'nation,' and even 'spiritual centre . . .' These may be beautiful things for the hearts that cherish them. I am interested in putting, if possible, at least a half million more Jews into Palestine.[172]

By the end of World War II, when the atrocities of the Holocaust became fully known, the aging Schulman's fervor for settlement of the European refugees in Palestine reflected a powerful sense of urgency. He confided that his

> . . . very heart aches for the tragedy of Israel. All our ideologies pale into insignificance when we consider what is happening . . . If the Zionists could get what I advised them to take in 1937 - adequate partition, - it would be the best. Immigration into Palestine of as many Jews as possible is the real core of the matter.[173]

Schulman's rejection of the Zionist platform never subsided nor waned. There is a remarkable consistency that characterizes his views, even in the face of the numerous startling world events, any one of which could have facilitated a philosophical change. It is clear, however, that even from the beginning of his career, his rejection of Zionism as a conception of Israel remained a philosophical and ideological repudiation and not a matter of practical development. As early as 1917 he articulated:

> . . . if the Zionists would only eliminate the little word 'the' from the description of their program, and say that Zionism is a

> movement to secure a publicly and legally assured home for Jews in Palestine, and not for the Jewish people, I would immediately become a Zionist, because the whole question would become a practical and utilitarian one.[174]

Schulman did not reject practical development of Palestine as a haven for Jews, but rather, looked with disdain on the Zionist ideology that attempted to commit the entirety of Israel to the doctrine that Palestine alone was its homeland. Even on the eve of the establishment of the nation of Israel, Schulman was distressed at the selection of "Israel" as the name for the nation. He held that the terms "Israel" and "Jew" represented all Jews throughout the world and carried a religious connotation. For these two reasons, he objected to the appropriation of either name for this Palestinian state. Further, he persisted in his belief that there could never be a "Jewish State;" rather, there could only exist a Palestinian State with Jews in the majority. Schulman suggested that the new State be called Herzlia, or perhaps Ziona, thereby not appropriating a name such as Israel which he maintained they simply had no right to utilize.[175] In explaining his refusal to join the anti-Zionist American Council for Judaism, Schulman best articulated his own unique position: neither anti-Zionist nor Zionist. He had begun to view his denunciation of Zionism coupled with his strong support for Palestinian development as an anomaly. He described his love for Israel which animated his drive for Palestinian

development and tempered his outspokenness on his philosophical disdain of Zionism as the primary reason for his unique position:

> I, therefore, do not satisfy the extremists of the Zionists or the Anti-Zionists. My love for Israel has very early in my career made me distinguish between my duty to help it and my philosophy of Judaism which in the Prophetic spirit I have championed fearlessly . . .[176]

Indeed, Schulman had adopted an anomalous position with his seemingly contradictory utter rejection of Zionism and his energetic devotion to the upbuilding of Palestine. Yet within that ideological tension, he arrived at a synthesis of those diverse positions. During his second trip to Palestine in 1935, he became more convinced in his conviction of the religious nature of Israel. It was there that he concluded that Palestine and the Jews who had settled there were in great need of the presentation of the ethical and spiritual elements of Judaism.[177] Observing little religious vitality there as a result of the minority of immovable orthodoxy and the dominant secular nationalism, Schulman realized that Palestine might be served well by Reform Judaism. When he presented this new perspective to the Central Conference of American Rabbis in his monumental paper "Israel," opposite to Abba Hillel Silver advocating the Zionist position, many people were enthused at the potential for a meeting of the minds through the synthesis of a spiritual Zionism.[178]

Schulman best described this synthesis in calling for the introduction of liberal Judaism to Palestine:

> And so let us work together, we the religionists and those who differ from us. Palestine will lead to the new synthesis. Reform Judaism has the grandest opportunity in its history; it has the opportunity for martyrdom. Let us send half a dozen young men or more to Palestine to bring the message of Progressive Judaism . . . What Palestine needs to-day, in my humble opinion, is a message that will teach the rising generation the religious and ethical content of the heritage of Israel . . . We have already pledged ourselves in this Conference to help build up a Jewish Palestine. We are cooperating with our brethren who differ with us in their philosophy of Jewish life. Let us also feel that Palestine is a field for us . . . Not to stand aloof is our aim, but recognizing the value of Palestine for hundreds of thousands of our brethren in Israel, let us help increase the settlement and, at the same time, let us bravely uphold the truth that Israel is not a goy like other goyim, but it always was, it is now, and if it is to live at all, will always be, a witness to God.[179]

Like many non-Zionists, Schulman finally came to terms with a Jewish nation once the State of Israel was established. Writing to his colleague and Zionist proponent Abba Hillel Silver, Schulman graciously extended his best wishes:

> I feel the need of saying to you that I hail the courageous assertion of the Jews of Palestine, with pride in their spirit and I invoke God's blessing upon their efforts. May God bless the New State out of Zion and according to the Midrash, may He protect it against every kind of danger. May he give victory to the valient defenders of their country and may peace come soon . . . I congratulate you on the dignity and brilliance with which you have represented the cause before the United Nations.[180]

Indeed, Schulman shaped himself into a unique position in the nationalist-religionist controversy. He maintained his deep conviction that Israel was a religious community with an important sense of mission that could only be realized as it lived among the nations of the world. This religious perspective was the driving force that colored his theology and buttressed his rejection of Zionism with its nationalist view of Israel. He advocated the upbuilding of Palestine and settlement of persecuted Jews there long before other non-Zionists arrived at this position. In the days when the controversy had heated to an acrimonious level, Schulman parted company with the vehement anti-Zionists and instead, called for a new synthesis of religious and nationalist views through the vehicle of a spiritual Zionism. Schulman had fashioned himself outside of either camp, and in the process, was perhaps greatly misunderstood. At the same time, however, he anticipated an approach which Reform Judaism would later attempt with some success in the State of Israel, the introduction of Progressive Judaism to a land which until then had no alternative to the dominant secularism or the oppressive religious orthodoxy. In addition to this synthesis, Schulman's ideas remain highly valuable for study today, as his ideological positions concerning the relationship of a Jewish nation to the majority of Jews living outside that state provide

great insight to the as yet unresolved and difficult dynamic of Israeli-Diaspora relations. The great questions which he raised are still up for debate, and as such his penetrating views merit careful review and distillation towards responding to the demanding issues which still confront us today.

## CHAPTER IV

## SAMUEL SCHULMAN, GOD AND JUDAISM

> If one asked me what are the fundamental beliefs which have dominated your own spiritual life, which have been the innermost convictions of your own heart, which have inspired your message to men, I would say: I believe in God, I believe in Israel, His servant, on behalf of mankind, and I believe in America, God's word to humanity, God's revelation through political democracy.[181]

As a religious leader, Schulman believed that religion is the soul of a people, influencing every aspect of the civilization of which it was a part. He spoke of religion as a composite of feelings, beliefs and conduct, each element with a distinctive function. Feelings were the driving force for a person and for the religious system. Beliefs served to interpret those feelings, moving from the emotional to the intellectual realm. Conduct was the proof of the sincerity of feelings and beliefs.[182] As such, religion was a practical matter to be lived in the world beyond the synagogue walls, touching into every area of life. For the entire span of his career, Schulman viewed religion as all-encompassing in its influence on a culture. No culture or civilization was complete without religion, for its religion served as the source of its values, its philosophy, and its education. With his reverence for the principles of democracy, Schulman

pointed proudly to the unifying nature of religion. He spoke of its universal and democratic influence, appealing to all classes of people and overshadowing economic and cultural distinctions. It was, to his mind, a foretaste of complete equality that had not yet been attained, even in America's great democratic structure.[183] In addition to the inspiration of ideals, religion provided a practical educational value to a culture, expanding and enlarging values and possibilities. He spoke of the great educators of the spirit, including the love of God, the love of man, the love of truth, and the love of beauty. Schulman believed that these creative powers produced the fruits of spiritual life. He was quick to point out that the latter three areas, ethics, philosophy and science, and art and music were historically children of the first, religion. Even in modern times, he saw an abiding interconnection, with religion providing the unity of culture.

> When the root begins to die, there is a danger for the tree with all its branches. When religion declines, there is a decline of idealism all along the line. And if we could imagine religion altogether destroyed . . . we would envisage the beginning of the decay and destruction of human culture.[184]

Schulman believed that religion was essential for the individual, as well. He believed that every person had a real need for religion, comparable to many other human needs. Religion served as a response to that need

of human nature, giving every person the opportunity for hope, faith, and discipline. Religion provided its own rewards in the benefits it provided a person for daily living:

> The function of religion is to lead men to God, and as a result, to make them happy. The purpose of religion is not to explain the inexplicable, but to help life. It is to bring man to God, to give him the inspiring and comforting thought that he is carried by everlasting arms, and therefore, to help him live wisely and gain, as the reward, the happiness that he seeks.[185]

Schulman's idea of religion's influence on the individual included both the spiritual and the practical. He regarded faith as essentially a mystical experience; in many of his sermons and addresses, he emphasized an understanding of God that led out of one's own personal experiences and not through in-depth intellectual rationalism or theological study of God. By the same token, Schulman viewed religion's essential value to the individual in most practical terms; he was fond of speaking about Judaism as an expression of the simple, profound truths of the ethical life.

> Religion, according to Judaism, is not only faith in God, but a judgement and discipline of human life . . . Judaism did not make men see the essence of religion in inexplicable mystery, but rather, in the gloriously resplendent revealed things of God's Law, as it is to be expressed in daily conduct.[186]

More specifically, he often spoke of religion's great value to the individual in bestowing responsibility and thus providing a standard and an authority for our moral judgements.

Indeed, Samuel Schulman was a thorough and mature religious thinker. He brought to his thought and theology a complete philosophical background and a depth of insight which few could match. Although he never composed a systematic theology or even a basic explanation of Judaism and Jewish thought, Schulman would have been entirely capable of such an endeavor. We are provided with much information about his theological views in his extensive collection of sermons and addresses. Although not of a scholarly nature, they afford us the clearest picture and the widest window through which to understand the theology and religious thought of Samuel Schulman. In his later years, Schulman devoted more of his thought, time and energy to formulating a basic understanding of modern Reform Jewish thought and theology. One landmark formulation of his own thought is outlined in his 1937 "Statement of Principles for the Guidance of the Modern Jew" drafted single-handedly, and later rejected by the Central Conference of American Rabbis for a modernization of its Pittsburgh Platform. Two years earlier, Schulman presented a paper entitled "Israel" to the C.C.A.R. in which his theology is presented in greater

detail. Together, the Statement and his paper "Israel" were his "crowning glories," serving as an enduring testimony to his great theological knowledge, talent, and insight.

Toward the end of his career, Schulman summarized Judaism for his congregants, discussing what he thought were its three main ideas: God, Law and Hope.[187] This chapter examines the theology and religious thought of Samuel Schulman, organizing much of his thought under these three principles. In addition, this chapter also undertakes an exploration of Schulman's view of Reform Judaism and related issues.

## GOD

For Samuel Schulman, God was the first principle from which all his beliefs and thoughts flowed. His entire theology, his philosophy of Judaism, and his world-view were permeated with a deep, abiding faith in God. Such an insistence on the Divine was his guiding light in his formulation of his varied theological positions and in his belief in the nature of Judaism, as well (see Chapter III). Indeed, God was at the very foundation for Samuel Schulman, serving as the nourishing source and root for the blossoming of his creative thought. Schulman often proclaimed the greatness of Judaism for emphasizing the centrality of God and not of humans. This theistic,

God-centered theme was repeated quite often and the issue of belief in God was woven into many of his sermons. In the over 100 self-designated major sermons and addresses of his career, Schulman devoted nearly half of them to at least partial discussion of God and God-related concerns. This preoccupation is more remarkable when one considers the great rise of secularism in its many forms during the first third of this century. At times, Schulman seemed completely driven by the theme, like a "God-intoxicated" prophet railing against an age of secularism in the Jewish and general worlds. He often blamed the ills of society and the breakdown of traditional religious faith on the self-deification of humankind. So strongly did he hold such a belief, that his 1937 Statement of Principles for the Guidance of the Modern Jew began with its first principle of the subordination of humans to God.[188] This strong conviction remained consistent throughout his entire career, as Schulman implored the listener to renew his faith through a sense of dependence on God:

> All along the line, man is subordinate to God . . . In a democratic age, it is good to remind ourselves that although man is a king at the ballotbox, he is neither the exclusive determiner of his own destiny, nor is he the standard of truth and right. He is always to look beyond himself to God.[189]

He believed that such an idea of human dependence through subordination of self to God was one of Judaism's most essential teachings.

Schulman also believed that yet another aspect of the Jewish genius in religion was the conception of a purely spiritual imageless Deity. The harmonization of the abstract, distant, transcendent God with the idea of a near immanent God was a great theological achievement. He asserted that this paradox alone could satisfy both the intellect and the heart as both joined together to seek God. With such a unique conception of a purely spiritual God, Judaism did not allow any possible image to arise, even as it did not allow for any incarnation. This jealous guarding of the pure, imageless God insured that Judaism would have a universal appeal and that such a conception of God could have meaning to anyone. ". . . Judaism jealously guards the uniqueness of God's oneness and spirituality . . . Such a conception of God can satisfy the profoundest thinker and the humblest man."[190] This spiritual God also insured a unique theological innovation for Judaism: an absence of dogma. Schulman asserted that this was another quality to Judaism's greatness, for it meant that the human mind would be granted intellectual freedom without the conflicts of belief that arose in other religious systems. In his tireless fights in responding to anti-Semitic attacks,

he articulated a celebration of the Jewish genius for a purely spiritual God. Responding to the charge that Judaism was strictly rational and too abstract, he stated:

> The Prophetic genius created a religion deliberately without myths, because the religion was to be ethical and spiritual. And the value of such a religion is immense. The so-called abstract God gives complete freedom to the human intellect. Myths, especially when they become petrified into dogmas, prove stumbling blocks for the intellect and snares for morality. The Jewish conception of God chains Him to no fact in nature, identifies Him with no event in the past, completely exhausts Him in no personality. The intellect, therefore, has complete freedom to roam through the universe, through literature and through history and biography . . . It is the purely spiritual conception of God as beyond nature and unexhausted in any concrete manifestation of life, which gives the intellect complete freedom.[191]

Schulman intimated that had the entire Western world accepted a religion like Judaism that uniquely emphasized the spiritual God who was both transcendent and immanent, then the secularism so popular in his day would not have arisen. He held that the tendency of human self-glorification was a direct consequence of the Christian emphasis of God's incarnation in a man.[192] And more than merely preventing the rise of secularism, Schulman asserted that the pure spirituality and unimageability of the Jewish conception of God had great intellectual, moral and social consequences. The intellectual effect of such a doctrine

provided for consonance between religion and knowledge, especially with science.

> . . . if an invisible God had been the object of worship, perhaps a four-centuried conflict between religion and science would have been avoided. This conflict has left ravages in the Western mind. The masses brought up in credulity at last became emancipated and there percolated even into them the suspicion against all supernatural religion. An unnecessary divorce was brought about between Faith and Knowledge.[193]

This doctrine of the purely spiritual God had profound moral effects, as well. It provided for a God that could not be known through a spiritual representative, and thus, could only be sought through ethical living by His commandments. Socially, the invisible, unincarnated God served to center human focus on concerns of this world, instead of encouraging people to dwell upon speculation of the next life. Thus, this Jewish conception of God had the effect of making Judaism what the Victorian writer, George Eliot called, a "this-worldly religion." Finally, the purely spiritual God had the additional social effect of ". . . the indestructible hope which animated Israel."[194] In his crusade against the rising tide of secularism that seemed to sweep the age, Schulman was fond of pointing out the positive consequences of a belief in God, as well as the detriments of abandoning one's belief. To a large degree, much of his theology is a consequence of a theistic belief, as he makes God his

first principle and foundation for all that follows. Some specific individual effects of faith, however, include the ideas that God leads to humility, to human unity, to human progress, to inspiration and idealism, and to law. Schulman asserted that a true belief in God and the concomitant subordination of human power to Divine Power would lead to a healthy humility among people. Aware of the human dependence on God, people would become less enamored by their own success and more conscious of yet a deeper obligation to others.[195] Thus, paradoxically, the centrality of God and not of humans, encouraged a humility which insured greater service to fellow humans. Another practical consequence of a firm conviction about God, he taught, was the democratic ideal of the unity of humankind. If one truly subscribed to the notion of the Fatherhood of God, then the logical outcome was the brotherhood of mankind. Thus, an abiding faith served to teach human equality, as an ideal, as well as a practical life value. "There is no absolute distinction between men of various bloods. They are one in God. God's unity guarantees the unity of humanity made in His image."[196] Yet another product of faith in God was human progress. As an adherant to the post-Enlightenment idea of advancing progress, Schulman asserted that without faith, there could be no advancement of values, of ideas, of knowledge and of morality.

In the progression from natural to spiritual/ethical individual, he instructed:

> The path of life . . . has been upward . . . Humanity lifted itself from the dirt, because with a divine impulse, it searched beyond the stars to a God that made them. There never was a forward movement in civilization of peoples, or a creative originality and transforming vision of the individual, that was not permeated with a faith in a Greater than man, in God. Humanity did not rise by attempting to lift itself by its own boot-straps. In the name of a God, it triumphed over and transfigured the beast within it.[197]

Connected to this outcome of progress, he also taught that faith in God also provided the believer with inspiration and idealism with which to be nourished in the practical work of life. Without that faith, gone would be the source of aspiration towards which humans can grow. Faith provided that necessary idealism for creating a moral culture upon which a belief in God insisted.

While he often detailed the positive fruits of faith in God, Schulman was as quick to dwell on the negative consequences of forsaking that faith. With his entirely God-centered thought, Schulman was clear to make himself heard on the various issues of secularism. He spoke boldly about atheism, humanism, ethical culture, and other fashionable religious philosophies of the day. Schulman felt no compulsion to address the subject of secularism delicately. He chose to articulate his position with fire and with vigor, ever-mindful of the

great challenge they presented to his brand of Judaism. In particular, he lashed out against the inroads made by atheism, ethical culture, humanism, and those who viewed Judaism as a civilization. Schulman's fierce attack against atheism was an obvious consequence of his God-centered thought. He railed against those who were certain that no God existed, calling their position ". . . the most blooming piece of dogmatism that ever existed."[198] He rejected such thought as a manifestation of human folly stemming from a dogma of overwhelming human pride:

> . . . to say that God is not means to refuse to give an answer to the fundamental questions of life which reason demands. It is to reprove the authority from human conscience which talks of right and wrong, and it is to rob humanity of a source of consolation and hope which have given dignity and happiness to human existence. Atheism is merely a dogma of overwhelming human pride.[199]

The only attribute which he found in atheism was its fanaticism that ". . . will shock men and women back into the naturalness of religion. They will recognize the hideousness of the blackness and darkness of human life which such atheism opens before mankind."[200] Schulman's polemic against ethical culture were equally fierce. He challenged the principles of the popular movement as a distortion of the great truths of Judaism in its attempt to explain religion along one dimension or by

one formula. His objection to ethical culturism was not as much for an absence of God, as for its assertion that religion and ethics were separate entities. Such a view went against every notion which Schulman held dear. "The originality of the genius of Israel and of Israel's religion consisted in this, that it brought about a perfect fusion of religion and ethics."[201] Of course, he objected, as well, to the exclusion of God and questioned if ethical principles could sustain people in their thirsting need for God. Perhaps Schulman was more vigorous in his challenges to ethical culture because its emphasis on the ethical life touched so closely to his own interest in ethics as the predominant facet of religious life. He expressed a parallel concern to Dr. Felix Adler, leader of the Ethical Culture Society when he wrote concerning his criticisms: ". . . perhaps I have spoken rather sharply. It is my way. The psychology, however, is very simple. Those whom we love, perhaps irritate us most when we are compelled to go different ways from theirs."[202] Equally repugnant to Schulman's philosophy of Judaism as purely a religion was the description of Judaism as a "civilization," made famous by Mordecai Kaplan. Such a philosophy was for him, merely another distasteful brand of modern secularism, with its worship of humans and its dethronement of God. He accused such a philosophy of making a distinct break with the continuity of Jewish

history as grounded in its religion. Speaking of the description of Judaism as a "civilization" or as a "culture," Schulman made bold:

> There peeps through it . . . a tremendous heresy which destroys the whole tradition of Israel. This word is a desperate attempt to grab at the rag of racialism with which to cover the spiritual nakedness of a timid atheism or, at best, old-fashioned agnosticism . . . it is dangerous.[203]

And while far from timid in his objections to Judaism as a civilization, his attacks on humanism were even more vigorous. Perhaps Schulman believed that the humanists were more "dangerous" than any other form of secularism, but more likely is the possibility that he identified humanism as a generic term for the many types of secularism that arose during the most active years of his career. He decried the humanists for the need for scientific proof in order to know about God. He criticized the notion that because the Divine hasn't been seen by them, God has ceased to exist. He questioned their need for the formula of natural science as the only valid path to knowledge. And perhaps most troublesome was the humanists' emphasis on the centrality of humans instead of their subordination to God. He firmly held that such a philosophical foundation was a perilous path for humankind leading to regression: ". . . if man continues to have such faith in himself only, without God, then instead of progressing, humanity will retrograde into superstition

and anarchy."[204] As humanism was a menace to the future progress of humankind, so too, did Schulman consider it an unhealthy present spiritual condition of the world. He described its inability to respond to real and desperate human spiritual needs:

> For the modern Humanist, God is not an objective reality, a Power, not ourselves, before and after man, and transcending man, but is being made by man. Such a conception can only be temporary, it cannot feed the starving heart of humanity.[205]

So complete was Schulman's rejection of any manifestation of secularism and/or humanism, that he made no room for scuh thought in his philosophy of Judaism. In a thought system so permeated with God as its first principle, there could be no place for the humanist or the secularist. Indeed, Schulman made no apologies for this exclusion in his theological summary, the "Statement of Principles for the Guidance of the Modern Jew." He confided: ". . . and the Humanists I have not envisaged at all. We cannot write for them in new Judaism."[206] In fact, Schulman later went on to state that his entire Statement was, in effect, a polemic against humanism and Jewish secular nationalism. Humanism had become an enemy of Samuel Schulman, a force to be conquered in its opposition to those principles for which he fiercely stood. Yet Schulman's rejection of humanism and other secular philosophies was not always so zealous. In examining his

response and the tone of his objections, it soon becomes clear that his ideas about the nature of humanism moved from mild challenge to impassioned rejection over the course of his career. Early in his career, he dismissed those who rejected God as lacking a certain grace and humility.[207] Later he spoke of the humanists with greater intensity, chastising them and instructing that they were deserving of pity for what they turned away:

> Let them not boast who have not religion. Let them pity themselves because something is atrophied in them. What would we say of a deaf man who gloried in the fact that he did not hear symphonies, no matter how many masters created them. We would not only deplore his deformity, but we would pity his folly. Religion is indispensable for every human soul.[208]

At this time in his career, Schulman escalated the tone of his polemic, charging that humanist and secularists were guilty of idolatry. He described their philosophy as the enthronement of man in the place of God with the corresponding self-glorification of man. Warning that one idolatry easily led to another, he cautioned that secularism could result in a breakdown of authority, and ultimately, of morality.[209] But the severity of his challenge further increased as Schulman began to warn of the impending digression in the historical pattern of increasing progress as a result of the possible widespread acceptance of secularism.[210] Finally, reaching the latter stages of his career, Schulman's rejection of any kind

of secular philosophy took on a tone of near-desperate plea. His attacks against secularism, be it humanism or nationalism, reflected his growing intolerance while his tone betrayed a deep bitterness over the inroads it had made. He charged that the secularists had destroyed the distinctiveness of Judaism, namely its pure religious nature upon which Schulman's entire theology was predicated. Attempting to place responsibility for the eventual destruction of Israel due to the beliefs of a secular philosophy he implored:

> . . . all such secularism is the assimilation that means the destruction of Israel . . . Such a theory assimilates away the Jewish SOUL, for Israel never was a people like other peoples . . . God was the central fact--never Israel as a people. It is the latest kind of heresy to disenthrone God in the Jewish heart and in his place, put the Jewish people itself.[211]

Although we cannot know why this gradual transformation from mild objection to bitter rejection of secularism occurred within Schulman's thought, we can speculate on several possible reasons. Perhaps Schulman's vehemence of response increased as he saw the success which secularism was meeting among society in general, and in particular, among his constituency of prominent New York Reform Jews. He often bemoaned the breakdown of religion and tried vigorously to bring his congregants back to a spiritual awareness of Judaism as a religion. Perhaps his increasing fervor over the years reflected

the tone of desperation he attached to a lifetime struggle on behalf of a God-centered religion that he clearly recognized was losing ground. Feeling beseiged on all fronts, from ethical culture, humanism, nascent beginnings of Reconstructionism, and of course, Jewish nationalism, he was forced to adopt a seige-like fervor in what seemed to him a lonely battle. Then too, as his entire philosophy and theology crystallized so clearly in the latter years of his career, perhaps he perceived such a contradiction of his theistic thought as a challenge to him personally. It is possible that the deep convictions of his own thought became so internalized, that it became increasingly difficult to separate the secular rejection of his God-centered thought from a rebuff of him as a person. Whatever the possible reasons for this change in tone, it is most clear that Schulman's deepest convictions were at stake in the growing influence of secularism. What began as an objection to a differing theory, in the end, was transformed into a forceful defense in the battle for his own philosophy.

In an attempt to respond actively to this growing problem of the rise of secularism, Schulman sought a creative way in which to bring Jews back to the religion of Judaism. He asserted that in the face of new philosophies which sought to change the fundamental God orientation of Judaism, it was incumbent upon Jewish religious leaders to experiment with bold new methods of bringing

Jews back to his conception of the traditional religious structure. Drawing on the success of Christian revivals, Schulman suggested that Judaism was in need of a similar revival. He spoke of the conversion of Jews to Judaism that could result from such a large-scale undertaking.[212] Borrowing even from the terminology of Christian revival settings, he unabashedly championed his new-found solution of a Jewish religious revival:

> To do this, novel methods will be needed. We are facing an unprecedented situation . . . We need to-day, an appeal to the Jew, which will kindle his imagination, which will resurrect his subconscious religious self . . . We must organize large mass meetings, we must appeal to the straying Jews and Jewesses to come back to the faith. We must seek to pierce the conscience of men and women. We must enter upon a soul-winning campaign.[213]

Taking his idea to the Association of Reform Rabbis of New York and Vicinity, Schulman embarked on specific plans to organize such a mass revival meeting. Chairing the Association's Committee on Jewish Revival created at Schulman's behest, a group of five rabbis met in March of 1920 to draft plans for a Revival. Expanding on Schulman's idea, they envisioned a non-partisan meeting complete with singing of a multi-voiced choir and inspirational speeches. They intended to pledge men and women at these revival meetings to rededicate themselves to Judaism and to attend public worship at a synagogue of their own choice.[214] Schulman insisted that

such a revival of religious faith would be an important factor in stemming the growing tide of secularism. He believed that fundamental to the problem of secularism was the inability of the religious establishment to find creative ways, such as a revival, to respond to new demands.

> We have been content with the routine of tradition and convention. We have trusted too much in ancient machinery. We have not been progressive enough in our methods . . . If men and women will not come to the Synagogue, we must seek them out in the thoroughfares. With new methods, we must carry to them the message of the Synagogue.[215]

But such a bold idea was short-lived from its inception in 1919 to its apparent death the following year. As Chairman of the Revival Committee, Schulman wrote to Louis Marshall and other prominent Jewish leaders soliciting sympathy and participation to help finance such an endeavor. There is no record in Schulman's nor in Marshall's extensive correspondence of any reply by Marshall. Shortly thereafter, any trace of the revival idea is dropped in Schulman's correspondence and addresses. Schulman's hope for a religious revival to bring Jews to Judaism never materialized but he continued to oppose any form of secularism in more conventional ways at every opportunity he could find.

Schulman's God-permeated thought for which he so valiantly fought throughout his career led him to a

related concern of the religious enterprise: ethics. In attempting to inculcate in people a true love of God, he was confident that such an awareness of the Divine would inevitably lead to the love of humankind, as expressed in the ethical life.

> From our real and sincere communion with God, we return with a distinct mental attitude to the world of men. Having discovered the Father, we see in man the brother. A truly spiritual mind . . . respects all personalities. For beyond the personality, that is to say, the mask, he sees the light of God, shining through the faces of his fellowmen . . . When the egotistic self is melted by love unto God, a love fills the human soul, and it is thus educated for the recognition of every child of man as equally a possible revealer of something of the Divine.[216]

Thus, he held that God's immanence would help to escort the individual from the purely spiritual awareness to the only logical outcome of leading an ethical life. From almost the beginning of his ministry, Schulman demonstrated a great interest in the subject of ethics as a branch of religion. This interest led to a thorough investigation of the role of ethics in Jewish life and was perhaps, one of the earliest components of Schulman's theology, remaining as a cornerstone of his thought throughout his entire career. As a result, Schulman authored an 8,000 word tract essay discussing the topic. Published by the Tract Commission of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and the Central Conference of American

Rabbis in the second decade of this century, Jewish Ethics eventually underwent a number of editions. In treating such a complex element of theology, Schulman displayed his remarkable talent for presenting a subject in a readable manner to the layman. He seemed to take the raw material of scholarly research and depth of understanding and successfully process it in stimulating and clear terms for a popular audience. Thus, Jewish Ethics was one of his most well known works, utilized by Jews and non-Jews alike. The essay outlines several of his ideas of what comprises Jewish ethics. He begins the discussion of ethics within the context of Jewish theology. Comparing the ethical life to a tree, he places the roots in a belief in God. The trunk is Israel who serves its God with its branches and shade that is destined to embrace humankind. The fruit of this tree is justice and love, as well as truth and peace which become ripe through ethical laws and living among humans. Such a tree produces the blossom of a pure heart.[217] More than an analogy, this description provides us with a streamlined understanding of Schulman's view of the relationship of ethics to God and to Israel. Jewish Ethics continues to outline several major components of the nature of Jewish ethics including its universality, pure idealism, social orientation, central virtues, divine standard, and discipline. Schulman instructs that

while Jewish ethics may have originated in the Jewish consciousness, they are intended to envelop all of humankind. He suggests that in the interest of universal appeal, it is no accident that some of the noblest characters in the Bible are not described as Jewish, including Job and Ruth. He also stressed that this universality of ethics is in perfect accord with Judaism as a religion of conduct:

> Humanity, in order to lead the right life and to earn salvation, need not become Jewish. All it has to do is to obey the fundamental laws of righteousness. This is in accordance with the conception of Judaism that man is not saved by creed, but by deed.[218]

He goes on to describe the adherance to God's ethical law as purely idealistic in nature, without any other motive. Jewish ethics were to be lived not for any hope in future reward nor for fear of divine retribution, but rather, for the sake of the pure goodness to be found in the teachings of Jewish ethics.

> The aim must be the moral good itself and nothing else . . . There was to be no mere satisfaction in observing the law externally, because Jewish ethics was never, from the earliest times of Jewish life, a merely external legalism. It always had to do with the heart, with motive, with the genuine love of goodness.[219]

In addition, Jewish ethics included the important characteristic of its social orientation. It was not centered in the individual soul with its specific quest for salvation. Intimating an important contrast between the

Jewish and Christian views, Schulman wrote that the dominating facet of Jewish ethics is its social orientation, binding the individual to the community to which he belongs. Salvation was attained through the salvation of the community and through the joint efforts of many people to insure the ethical life.[220] In summarizing the specific teachings of Jewish ethics, Schulman drew from its social orientation to arrive at the central virtues of justice and love. He envisioned justice to be the characteristic in social relations and love to be the motivating force and the binding tie of ethics. He conceded that justice was a more difficult virtue to realize because love came more naturally to the soul. Thus, social justice was a higher goal than mere beneficence, for it required greater discipline.[221] It is of no small interest that he internalized this commitment to social justice, as Schulman utilized his pulpit and his position on a number of occasions to advance important liberal social causes. Jewish ethics also provided a standard and an ideal in its foundation of God. He desired for people to approach ethics as the commandments of God and the force that binds one to God. In drawing God into the relationship, one also assimilates God's moral character into one's life. Thus, God is ever-present as a possibility and an ideal, an unwavering standard toward which one can always progress. Finally,

one other characteristic of Jewish ethics he outlined is the discipline it provided in transforming a person from his natural instinct to his spiritual self. Jewish ethics attempt to inculcate non-natural values such as justice and righteousness in an effort to help a person elevate himself from baser instincts to the higher qualities of a moral and spiritual life.[222] He saw ethics as the path of ascent from "dust of the earth" toward the goal of "little lower than the angels."

> What the Jew is commanded to do is to take his natural instincts and to moralize and sanctify them. The natural is inferior to the moral and to the spiritual because it is non-moral. A human being is sent into the world to solve his problem by moralizing his nature and sanctifying his life . . . He must take his human nature and educate it, govern it, and finally, exalt it.[223]

For Samuel Schulman, Jewish ethics was both a means and an end.

Jewish Ethics served as an excellent statement of the consistent conception of the topic which Schulman maintained throughout his life. What began as a cornerstone of his thought remained a critical foundation of his theology. As a result, he returned to the subject of ethics in discussions of a large variety of topics throughout his life. Schulman was able to bring some component of ethics to bear on almost any issue, thereby strengthening the well-rounded conception he had already

developed. Primary to his thought was the inexorable unity of religion and ethics. For this reason, as previously discussed (see Chapter II), Schulman was adamantly opposed to the instruction of ethics in public schools, as he saw this as an attempt to separate out two components of one inseparable unity. Schulman suggested on a number of occasions that it was the Jewish religion which best facilitated the fusion of religion and ethics into a single unity. As he did with other fundamental principles of his theology, he asserted that it was the "genius of Israel" to merge these two areas into one. He insisted that the Jewish religion, especially as made bold in prophetic pronouncements, was the highest form of religion due to its most complete fusion of the spiritual and the moral:

> But while originally, religion concerns only man's relation with God, it soon gets itself allied with morality, his relation to his fellowman. And in the highest form of religion and in the unique revelations of Hebrew genius, the union is the most intense, most complete, most interpenetrating that is to be found in history. Through this union, a man is made to learn that the best way to worship God and to prove one's faith in Him, is by the just and loving relation to his fellowman.[224]

For Schulman, Jewish ethics embraced the essence of his religion, the very flame of the Jewish spirit. Morality in human relationships was the human expression of the Divine revelation. The ethical was the primary ingredient

in the composite tapestry known as Judaism. To illustrate this, Schulman contrasted Judaism with other religions as a uniquely practical religion. By this he meant that its primary emphasis was on morality even over intellectual or theological elements of religion. He attributed such an accentuation of the practical facet of religion to divine revelation, as part of the unique gift which Judaism offered centuries before modern humankind had arrived at a similar emphasis of values:

> What the Jew does emphasize in religion is deed, action, ethics, law, duty. And is this not what the modern man is aiming at? Far from making myth the most important thing in religion, the modern man puts into subordinate position the intellectual element in religion and emphasizes the practical and ethical. The Jewish religion, thus anticipated by intuition, or theologically speaking, by revelation, what the modern man has arrived at as a result of centuries of development.[225]

So committed was he to this fusion of spiritual and moral elements that he once suggested that Judaism teaches nine-tenths of religion's content is what we know as morality.[226] Emphasizing the ethical as the highest form of religion, Schulman taught what the Jerusalem Talmud ascribed to God, "Would that they had forsaken Me, but observed my commandments." Judaism as a practical religion meant the emphasis on conduct and ethics and the indifference to creed or dogmatic formulation. Speaking of the Talmudic quote, he stated:

> I venture to say that such words are the boldest that have ever been spoken in the history of religion. For what they imply is this--that God is made to say that He is not interested in whether men and women acknowledge Him or not, whether they adore Him, give him praise or not . . . It means that the religiousity of a person is not proven by the profession of the lips, but by his conduct. That is the only test.[227]

Thus, it is clear that ethics was more than a rule for human relationships, but a fundamental facet of Samuel Schulman's theology. In living the ethical life which Judaism demanded of the Jew, Schulman pointed out the subsequent result of greater knowledge of God. It was his belief that knowledge of God was gained not through a thorough theological awareness of God's attributes, and not even in the contemplation of the mystic, but primarily, through accepting the demands of the Divine in leading an ethical life. In complete accord with the Kantian philosophical notion, Schulman believed that "'Knowledge of God' meant the discovery of Him through practical and ethical experience and ethical deed."[228] Thus, this fusion of the religious and the ethical had become so complete in his own theology, that a symbiotic relationship had been established: Humankind was ethical in its conscious or unconscious acknowledgement of God upon whom it drew as the source for morality. And through the application of the ethical ideals, a person was best able to discover God and draw himself closer to forge a

stronger spiritual bond. Ethics were indeed, inseparable from religion, at least in the philosophy and theology of Samuel Schulman

LAW

Fond of discussing Judaism's elevation of principle over personality, Schulman's second fundamental principle of theology was Law, "God's method with man." He held that only through human acceptance of the Divine demands made through Law did one come to a true understanding of God. Additionally, he viewed such obedience of Law as the crucial condition of human happiness and salvation.[229] He taught the classically Jewish idea that Law emanated from God, but endowed with free will, humans were free to reject or ignore the demands that such commandments placed on them. It is most interesting to note the progression of Schulman's thought on Law during the course of his career. One sees an unfolding of ideas, and a building of thought, culminating at the end of his career, especially in the cardinal expressions of his theology, the 1935 paper, "Israel" and the 1937 "Statement of Principles." Most noteworthy in Schulman's thought concerning Law, Ceremony, and Authority is his uniqueness within a Reform context. Inasmuch as his theology was a paradigmatic expression of a classical Reform perspective concerning God and Hope, Samuel Schulman was no

classicalist in his discussions of the meaning of Law. In this area, he seemed to turn away from classical Reform thought, proceeding with a rather sharp and unique turn towards tradition. No doubt he was influenced in his thought by the Orthodox background in which he was raised until the age of seventeen, but a sentimental attachment to the religion of his youth cannot fully account for any traditional leaning in the thought of such a thorough and critical theological mind. Perhaps his modified traditional thought, resulted from his dissatisfaction with the early classical Reformers' incomplete and unsystematic treatment of the nature of the ceremonial law. Whatever prompted Schulman to embrace such a unique view in his day, at the same time caused him to be a harbinger of the turn away from classical positions that Reform would follow some fifteen to thirty years later. Schulman outlined several reasons why one should accept the Divine Law. One reason to obey the Law was the path which it led to knowledge of God. Schulman believed that through Law, humans were enabled to emulate God, making an attempt at the theological principle of imitatio Dei. Thus, the entire idea of Law was not foreign to humankind. It could be grasped, and thus, God could be fathomed through the limited understanding afforded human nature.

> And as God's law is the expression of His character, so man's understanding of God's law results from man's own nature. As man is the image of God, the law conceived as coming from God is not something foreign to man. He recognizes it as the deepest law of his own being . . . The law of God is conceived as very near to man; man discovers it within himself, and at the same time, he recognizes it as the commandment of God.[230]

Then too, Schulman asserted that acceptance of divine Law provided a person with absolute standards against which to measure morality and ethical decisions. Subordinating oneself to such a Law gave one a final authority from which to seek guidance, instead of an ethical relativism which he believed would lead to an unbridled individualism and ultimately, chaos.

> Common sense . . . tells us through our conscience, that our instincts, our passions, our desires need restraint. They must be controlled. Otherwise, our own pleasure will always mean someone else's pain. One malady of our time is anarchistic individualism in morals . . . The individual is not the final authority . . . We have religion, not merely as belief in God, but as the acknowledgement of a law higher than our own will.[231]

In addition to the need for a standard or ideal, yet another reason to follow the Divine Law was Schulman's belief that obedience to this Law was the very purpose of life itself. He taught that humans were fundamentally in need of the discipline which law provides and that any negation of the law as the discipline of life was a negation of Judaism:

> Law is indeed the essence of Judaism. This may strike you as a paradox, coming from one who is a representative of Reform Judaism, but if Reform says of some laws, that they no longer express our religious feeling and are no longer adaptable to our environment, it has by no means broken with the conception of law as the discipline of life. If it ever did this, it would cease to be Judaism.[232]

Finally, Schulman suggested that a sense of duty is fostered in obedience to the Divine Law. Such an underlying value of duty is necessary for humankind's morality since obedience to the ethical laws was left to the free will. Unlike the laws of external nature which obey God necessarily, the Divine laws of ethics do not entail mandatory human obedience. In freely submitting oneself to the obligations of Law, one learned a sense of duty which would help one choose those laws in times when such a choice might entail greater sacrifice.[233]

What was the Divine Law of which Schulman offered these compelling justifications for embracing? Essentially, like most classical Reform theologians, he asserted that the divine Law was moral Law, and not the ceremonial or ritual law. If human conduct was the only proof or test of one's belief in God, and if that conduct was the manner in which we realized knowledge of God, then it followed that the path for that proper living must be a divinely revealed path of Law. Such a revelation of law was not through the priest nor the rabbi, as traditionally viewed, but through the Prophet. The force of his

emphasis on revelation was the authority which it provided the moral law: the Law of living was indeed, Law, and not merely a guideline. Such laws of conduct were commanded from God. Utilizing a comparison between the Divinely revealed moral law and the external laws of nature, Schulman explained that a natural law is not a force of nature, but an observed correspondence between cause and effect. In the realm of human relations, a similar law, or correspondence existed. Moral Law as a commandment from God was to be obeyed. Thus, Schulman affirmed that "Torah" should be translated as "Law" and not as "teaching" or "instruction." For

> Torah does mean LAW, for if the teaching is from God, if He gives the direction for our lives, that is no ordinary teaching . . . God's teaching for man is a command. It is really a law which he is called upon to obey. It is as much law, as is a law of nature.[234]

The content of this Law, he believed, could be found in the revelation of the Prophets, in a law which can be conceived as "being written in the heart" and not in a statute or code like the traditional Jewish conception of Law such as Shulchan Aruch. He insisted that the Prophets' use of the term "Torah of God" meant the moral law exclusively. If the Prophets, who were privileged to receive divine revelation spoke of Torah in this manner, then surely such an exclusively ethical conception of Torah as a fundamental principle of Judaism

was the correct understanding.

> . . . there cannot be any doubt that when a Prophet appeals to the people to listen to the Torah of God, or when he speaks of the Torah written in the hearts of men, he means the law of justice, and love, and truth; in short, the moral law.[235]

Schulman thus uniquely identified the revealed Divine Law with the Torah of the Prophets. Such Divine Law of morality consisted of the prophetic revelation of Law in its highest form as God's moral Law, and the vision which the Prophets provided as hope for the future. Schulman was proud of this conception which he developed of the Torah of the Prophets as the moral Law, for its implications meant that a Reform Jew could now subscribe to Torah as one of the three fundamental principles of Judaism along with God and Israel. The Reform Jew could embrace "Torah" even if his conception of the term was limited to the moral Law of the Prophets.[236] Schulman believed that he was the first to articulate this novel conception of Torah as Law. Having thus identified the Law of Torah with the moral law of the Prophets, his emphasis of law was in perfect accord with his views of God and ethics. He perceived these various components of Jewish theology as interrelated into a complete unity of thought. As such, it is easy to understand why he met disagreement to any part of his theological structure with such vehement defense: in the theological structure which he had built, <u>all</u> parts were needed in order for

the structure to stand. He thus proclaimed this rather strong statement about his conception of the Law:

> Now I hold that LAW, as such, provided we understand by it the Law of God, the law of ethical living, is of the essence of Judaism, and Israel's function is to bear witness to the fact that the only way to win salvation is by obedience of this divine Law. There is no other way. As soon as any thinker breaks with this conception of Law, he is stepping out of Judaism.[237]

The nature of Schulman's belief in the Revelation of moral Law blends a traditional belief of Divine Revelation with a more modern human element. He did not subscribe to a strictly traditional idea of the Torah as "from the mouth of God by the hand of Moses." He believed that the Bible was ". . . a unique communication of the human soul through the divine that is speaking in it."[238] This view consisted of Revelation emmanating from God through the medium of the human mind, as with religious mystics, and in its highest form, with the Prophets. Revelation was, therefore, a combination of the Divine and the human enterprise. It took God as the source of that revelation, but it could not be complete without the human mind and its knowledge of nature, history, as well as the culture in which it lives. Schulman described his view of revelation of God's Law, in his "Statement of Principles:"

> God revealed Himself to Israel and the world through our Scripture. The essence of the Revelation is the announcement of the Reality of God, His unity and holiness, and of the Way of Life for man. The medium

> of the Revelation was the human mind and this was, naturally, the child of the Age in which it lived and of the culture which it had. There is, therefore, in the Bible, a Divine and also a human element.[239]

With such a conception of revelation, Schulman was able to adhere to the ideas of eternity and ultimate authority of the Moral Law with its source in God, and at the same time, eradicate the historically and culturally bound elements which no longer applied to the changing needs of modernity. Indeed, such a conception satisfied two disparate purposes: the claim for eternity and the justification for modernity. Schulman harbored no doubts that the Prophets did encounter a first-hand experience of God in the revelations they received, just as he held that even today, a mystical experience was authentic. He embraced the idea that God was constantly engaging in the revelation process, especially through religious geniuses or mystics. Even if the content of such experience might be questioned, the essence of that experience, was in fact, revelation of God.[240]

Connected to his firm conviction of the nature of revelation as Divine through the medium of the human experience, Schulman was a true advocate of the compatibility of religion and science. Having lived through the great test of the Scopes trial, Schulman attempted on a number of occasions to demonstrate that no such conflict existed. In response to the national debate that ensued from the

Scopes trial concerning the nature of evolution, Schulman chaired a Central Conference of American Rabbis committee to draft a statement on Evolution. In the statement that he authored, Schulman contended that Revelation was not designed to disclose knowledge of the universe, such as that for which science seeks, but to impart knowledge of God. There was no conflict between religion whose domain is purpose and spirit, and science which sought to explain process and causal connection. While science sought cause, it could not hope to answer questions of essence and meaning to which only religion could respond. Thus, there was for Schulman not conflict, but cooperation between science and religion as they separately pursued their purposes.[241]

Schulman's conception of Revelation extended only as far as the Moral Law. Like most Reform thinkers, he did not include any area of ritual or ceremonial law as part of God's Law. Where Samuel Schulman parted company with many Reform theologians, however, was his view that ceremonial law was valuable for modern life. While he did not embrace the ritual aspects of Judaism as divinely revealed, he did hold that ceremony and symbol were fundamental facets of Jewish thought and practice for the modern Jew. Herein, Schulman differed greatly from the classical Reform Jewish paradigm, with his warm attitude to tradition and to the value of ritual. Schulman

consistently championed the idea that ceremony and ritual were never to be seen as a goal, or an end. Instead, he viewed them as strictly a means to an end, a device by which to become a better Jew and human being.[242] Ceremony was an important device for it served to help concretize the abstract notion of God.

> That is the great value of ceremonial and symbol. Man has never had his soul sustained merely by words, and certainly not by abstractions. In some way, by custom, by domestic habit, by the benediction, by the ritual, God is brought into our lives . . . That is the whole purpose of ceremony and ritual.[243]

In addition, he asserted that the greatest practical value of ritual was the training which it provided as the necessary discipline for the moral life. In this way, ceremony served as a means to the end of adherance to God's Moral Law. By training an individual in the daily rigors and sacrifices of ritual demands, ceremony enabled that person to take on the obligations, duty, and requirements by which he might not otherwise burden himself. Having consciously chosen to accept such a burden of ritual, the individual was better equipped to accept the more important obligations of the Moral Law which God had revealed.[244] Schulman credited this two-tiered understanding of the ritual leading to the moral as yet another aspect of the "genius of Judaism." Beyond its disciplinary usefulness, he conceived of ritual as the necessary symbol of the Moral Law. He bemoaned the loss of ceremony in

Reform Judaism, asserting that in the absence of dogma, Judaism needed the ceremonial elements as its only possible fulfillment of the religious need for symbol:

> . . . a religion that makes the moral law, as does the religion of Israel, the essence of God's revelation to man, and the only way in which to follow Him and the only means of our salvation . . . must have some symbol which will impinge upon life. All positive historic religions have symbols in addition to their fundamental truths and the ceremonial law, adapt it as we may in accordance with new circumstances, is still for us the symbol of our characteristic religion.[245]

He called upon Reform Judaism to arrive at a clear and proud conviction concerning the value of the ceremonial law, through retention or adaptation of old forms, or even the creation of new symbols. Finally, Schulman recognized the usefulness of ceremony in stemming the contemporary tide of acculturation and assimilation. He maintained that a warmer outlook on ritual would provide that necessary element of a particular Jewish life. Toward the end of his career, Schulman began to depart from the classical Reform position of universalistic emphasis. He feared that Reform had taken the pendulum too far toward the universal, to the exclusion and detriment of particularistic goals. Seeking to bring Jewish life back to a more moderate balance of universal and particular, he placed great hope in the value of ceremony as a device towards those ends. As such, he emphasized this rediscovery of the value of ritual.[246] His general

attitude concerning ritual was consistent throughout his career. From his early days in Kansas City, unto his theological statements framed during his retirement, Schulman approached the ceremonial elements of Judaism with an abiding appreciation of their value. In an age when the extremes of classical Reform rejection of ritual were abundant, Samuel Schulman was indeed a renegade. His conception was in many ways, a "prophetic" vision of what Reform Judaism needed, and indeed, of the turns which Reform Judaism would take decades later. He seemed to desire a blend of the Orthodox insistence on meticulous ritual adherance and the classical Reform rejection of ceremony, encompassing an awareness of ritual importance with a modern adaptation of forms. Striking out as an early pioneer for a more balanced Reform view of tradition, he pleaded:

> It all depends on the spirit. The ceremonial law when obeyed but not idolized, is an excellent discipline unto purity and holiness. In the building of the world of tomorrow as far as the internal affairs of Israel are concerned, perhaps a better and deeper appreciation of the value of the ceremonial law as a symbol may help our own moral and spiritual education.[247]

HOPE

The third major principle of Judaism which Schulman so fully embraced was its great emphasis on hope. He perceived the characteristic of Jewish optimism as the

ideal for the world and as a driving force for progress. "We are born optimists. Our optimism is the outflowering of the Jewish soul. And why should we not be optimists? The world is bad; but the world is young."[248] He boasted of this great gift of hope which Judaism offered the world, resulting in a deep conviction of unlimited progress and the eventual redemption of the entire human race. Thus, he wedded the contemporary view of progress so popular in his day to a theological underpinning of hope as a major foundation of Judaism. The Jewish principle of hope was a gift to the world because it was essentially, a universally human hope. And for Schulman, his unwavering reliance on hope became a remedy for surviving the chaos and upheaval that engulfed the world during his life. In a world where many of his principles were being so thoroughly tested, hope enabled him to believe that they would prevail. Thus, while others abandoned convictions of God and of unlimited human progress in the wake of nationalism, materialism, humanism, and the destruction of two world wars, he retained his deep principles as a result of his hope-filled philosophy. Specifically, the great foundation of hope is found most clearly in his conceptions of messianism, chosenness, and immortality.

Like most Reform thinkers, Schulman rejected the idea of a personal messiah. Such a rejection was strengthened by his belief in the disastrous consequences resulting

from the Christian messianic idea.[249] Instead, he subscribed to the concept of messianic era which humanity would bring through their joint efforts and through continued human progress. He cautioned that historically, every Jewish messianic movement which attempted to see hope fulfilled in any one person, ultimately led out of the Jewish religion.[250] Moreover, he asserted that Reform Judaism's rejection of a Messianic figure for a Messianic Era of the Kingdom of God was historically valid and Jewishly authentic, as it was in complete consonance with ancient Prophetic visions:

> Reform Judaism does not center the realization of this hope in any one person called the Messiah. It harks back to the vision of those Prophets who did not speak of any particular person, but envisaged God Himself as bringing about His Kingdom of righteousness in a perfected human society. This hope, stripped of all temporary expressions of it, means the ideal of unlimited human moral and spiritual progress.[251]

Regardless of either conception, concrete Messiah or messianic era, Schulman instructed that any concept of Jewish messianism was always a hope, and never a realization. Indeed, in reviewing his pronouncements on the Jewish idea of messianism, one questions if Schulman ever expected the advent of any messianic time. Perhaps he saw messianism more as an encouragement for hope and optimism, as a means more than an end. He often stated that:

> In Judaism, there are no fulfillments, there are only expectations. There is unbounded hope and vision for the future . . . Quick

> as it is to hope, it is hard to satisfy. For Judaism, the ideal is always in the future, never in the past.[252]

Any view of Jewish messianism was essentially a hope and vision of a perfect world. Indeed, this messianic outlook was the very essence of Jewish idealism. It was the fuel which enabled the Jew and ultimately, the entire world to strive for a perfected order. The essence of this Jewish idealism as reflected in the messianic hope was a great emphasis on universal education, progress, and perfection for the world.[253] This view of Jewish hope and idealism was for Schulman, an integral facet of Jewish theology, in its resulting view of salvation in this world. He was proud that Judaism had been described by George Eliot as a "this-worldly religion." Thus, this great unfulfilled hope with its eye turned optimistically to the future, combined with a view of the spiritual God and the value of Law, gave the Jew the strength to overcome adversity and continue in his efforts to strive for ultimate perfection in the world.[254] With God to inspire, Law to guide, and Hope as a vision as reflected in the Messianic outlook, the Jew would be able to work to establish the Kingdom of God on Earth.

Schulman believed that these three fundamental principles of God, Law and Hope were supplemented by Israel's mission and specifically, its status as a people chosen by God. He considered the notion of divine election not

merely a tangential idea, but a critical theological statement of Jewish purpose. While many other leaders of liberal Judaism were beginning to question the idea of chosen status as a claim for superiority, Schulman enthusiastically taught the idea of the value of divine election. On a number of occasions, he agreed publicly with Kaufman Kohler's statement that the fundamental doctrine in Jewish theology was God's choice of Israel.[255] Such a position was historically justified, he claimed, and could not be abrogated by the fear that others might misunderstand the assertion. He deplored such proposed reformulations of fundamental Jewish thought merely because of concern over others' perceptions. So important was the doctrine of divine election to his view of Jewish thought and theology, that it alone provided just cause and purpose for the continued existence of Judaism and its mission to the world. "The Western World . . . lives religiously by the ideas revealed through Israel. This doctrine is the driving force of our hopes and the power that has preserved us. It is the raison d'etre of our historic continuity and mission."[256] As such, the view of Israel as a people with chosen status was an integral part of the principle of Hope and of Jewish theology as a whole. It was not to be dismissed, for it provided many things to Jewish thought and purpose, if only understood correctly. Properly viewed, Schulman insisted

that divine election did not negate the universality of Judaism. The conviction of mission and chosen status was not designed for Israel to entertain any antithetical idea that it was separate from the world. Nor did divine election negate the understanding of dignity of every human and every people on the earth. He utilized the analogous idea that just as the notion of one man as the son of God does not minimize, but rather, magnifies the sonship of all humans according to Christian thought, so too does Israel's historically justified claim that one people was chosen to reveal God to humankind not remove it from the universal context in which it belongs.[257] Indeed, divine election, when coupled with the mission idea only binds the Jew with greater closeness to the general world. If the Jew's salvation was to be attained only through working towards the salvation of the world, then such a mission with which he was instilled would provide him with even stronger dedication to actualize his task. In response to the charge that divine election was a mask for a claim of racial superiority, Schulman was vigorous in his defense. Chosen status was not an expression of national vanity.

> We are chosen, yes, not for selfishness, but for service. Not for the gratification of our race pride, but for the maintenance of holy principles. Not for our glory, but for God's work. Not to isolate ourselves from the world, but to cooperate with it. Not to minimize the worth of others, but to impose a heavier burden upon ourselves; not to enjoy privilege, but to be burdened with a keener responsibility.[258]

Of course, acceptance of chosen status for the Jew meant acceptance of all burdens that came with such status. It placed a burden on Jews to live up to the high ideals which their mission taught. If one were to have such lofty principles, then even minor moral transgressions were magnified into large ethical deficiencies against the backdrop of such ideals. As such, the Jew was obligated to be better than average, to live more completely according to ideals than the non-Jew. "He whose sacred function is to witness to God in modern life, stands out through the contrast between theory and practice, as most glaring in his betrayal, when his deed belies his creed."[259] Inherent in its chosen status was the challenge to prove the claim by the life which every Jew lived. The chosen Jew was to be the object-lesson for the world in his moral discipline, exercise of heroism, and endurance of martyrdom. He was to be the living instruction to the world in right living, advancement of peace, and establishment of human justice. These were the real burdens of being chosen, the claim which placed the Jew in full public view, demanding strict realization in his conduct of the high moral principles which his religion taught.[260] Finally, Schulman believed that the concept of divine election was fundamental to the nature of Judaism. He taught that without such a view of itself, Judaism could never have undergone its unique transformation from ordinary nation to unique religious community. He maintained that even in the days

of the ancient commonwealth, the driving force of divine election caused the people to realize that its idea and purpose was too great to be restricted to national political expression. Thus, through the means of its chosen status did Israel finally arrive at its idea of mission, and did it eventually arrive at a philosophy of Israel, purely as a religion, with a unique spiritual purpose.

> What this claim to have been Chosen means is simply this, that it expresses in religious language what is the deepest fact of Jewish consciousness . . . We have acknowledged God, therefore God has acknowledged us. We have chosen as our life work in history the service on behalf of Him, therefore He has chosen us and given us for glory and for sorrow a unique position in the world.[261]

Schulman's third foundation of hope was the question of immortality. His views on this subject are characterized by ambivalence and uneasiness. In the early and middle years of his career, he tended to elude a thorough exploration of this theological principle, perhaps due to the uncertainty of his own personal views. When he did discuss immortality, it was usually in ambiguous, equivocal terms. As a result of this tentativeness, Schulman attempted to minimize the idea of a heaven transcendent, and instead emphasize the potential heaven that could be established here on earth. He placed himself in the company of the "ancient Hebrew mind" which dealt very little with the afterlife:

> The ancient Hebrew mind dealt very little with speculations upon the future life. That was not because it was indifferent to future life, but because it would not encourage the undue brooding over what is beyond us. Such was the intimate walk of the religious soul with Divinity . . . such was the strength of the feeling of the encompassing love of the Divine Presence here, that there was no need for indulging one's self in an exploration of celestial regions . . . And so it is today.[262]

Similar to his position on the messianic era, Schulman endeavored to draw his listener away from the indulgence of speculation of an afterlife, and instead, insist that the crucial issue was not the next life, but the life we build on earth. Quick to remind others that Judaism had an almost exclusive concern with this world, most of his sermons and addresses which treat the subject of immortality inevitably include some disclaimer of the Jew's concern for building heaven here on earth. Schulman's final word in those messages was simply not dwell for any length of time or to any depth on the topic:

> The Hebrew spirit did not exhaust itself in arguments about the future life. If a man walked with God here, the felicity of his experience was such that, feeling the Divine Presence, and therefore, assurance of his safety, he was content to let God dispose of his life for any future. Judaism was a religion that stood firmly on earth and reached out to heaven.[263]

By the latter years of Schulman's career, the ambivalence seems to yield to a greater clarity of his own views. His ideas were crystallized as indicated through a more direct treatment of immortality. Schulman began to

formulate the position that did not completely reject the possibility of future existence for humans, but neither did he fully embrace immortality. His tone betrayed a cautious acceptance of afterlife but not in the classic theological definition of immortality. He seemed to imply that some future existence awaits the human beyond this life as he indicated in his "Statement of Principles" that the individual ". . . is destined to a future life beyond the grave, in which God's justice and mercy will be fully manifested in him for his salvation and bliss."[264] In a more complete discussion of future life, he enumerated several different types of arguments for the hereafter of which Judaism partakes, including the nature of the soul itself, the ethical demands of the human spirit, the incompleteness of life, the argument from God's love, the argument from hope, and the notion of complete and perfect communion on earth between the soul of humans and God.

> I might sum up all the arguments for immortality by saying that our reason expects it, our sense of justice demands it, our love anticipates it, our hope perennially preaches it, and our faith sets the seal of conviction upon the belief fashioned by our reason, by our moral nature, by our affections, and by our aspirations.[265]

Although he had come to accept a hereafter, what Schulman rejected was immortality, as defined as an <u>eternal</u> life after death of infinite duration. He questioned such a

philosophical conception only because he did not believe that humans could possibly share the length of "life" with God. Only God was everlasting, infinite, and eternal. He therefore, considered any claim for the infinitude of human life as audacious, and even blasphemous.[266] Such a claim was tantamount to demanding co-equality with God. Therefore, he cautioned that we should not even entertain such a claim of eternal immortality, and instead, learn to be satisfied with whatever destiny awaits us. He instructed that:

> The essence of faith, the perfect freedom of the spirit, consists in having no claims, in making no demands, in murmuring no complaints. Enough it is for the soul to have been for a while a channel through which God has deigned to let life flow, in which even if in feeble whisper, He has spoken.[267]

Schulman's specific views became clear in the great theological summaries which he composed in his retirement, indicating a hope for some future existence without the unreasonable demand for eternal life:

> I, myself think . . . that man's spirit can survive the body, and I accept in advance what the Lord holds in store for me. But eternal life for the human spirit in consciousness and memory and individuality as a personality, co-equal and co-eternal with God, I do not believe in. Sooner or later, we pass away. If I may use a bold expression, God thinks us. We are fleeting thoughts in his eternal mind. He abides, and we sooner or later cease.[268]

Although Schulman's views ultimately crystallized in his later years, he always returned to the critical disclaimer

that speculation on the hereafter was simply unproductive.

> We must cease to emphasize religion as a preparation of man for a supernatural world. Judaism as a minor note in the symphony of its religious message, promises a future life after death. But the centrality in Judaism is not occupied by this thought.[269]

Inevitably, any discussion of the next world always led back to a discussion of this world.

No discussion of Samuel Schulman's religious thought would be complete without examining his understanding of Reform Judaism. Although he served two of the most prominent Reform pulpits in New York City and in the world, he was no typical Reform leader. Schulman was never radical in his own ideas of Reform and never repudiated sincere traditional Judaism. He viewed tradition warmly, as his attitude toward ceremony and ritual previously examined might indicate. Indeed, Schulman's Reform was rooted much more in philosophical and intellectual grounds and less concerned with the ceremonial elements. Unlike others who came to Reform in order to make the service more decorous or intelligible, he seemed to adopt Reform for its philosophical foundations of the Jewish mission throughout the world, and its negation of the racial aspects of Judaism. Thus, Schulman seemed in some ways, such as his views on Zionism, to be a classical Reformer; yet in looking beyond that veneer, he was never at home

with every idea of the Reform movement of his day regarding tradition, ceremony, rationalism, and other important ideas. He never could embrace Reform as the sum total of his Judaism and that ambivalence is found throughout his addresses and sermons. Although he always considered himself an authentic Reform Jew from the time he first adopted Reform at age eighteen, Schulman's public addresses seem to show a more positive attitude to Reform in the earliest days of his career. His enthusiasm was more evident then, with little apparent hesitancy in his celebration of Reform principles. Schulman defined Reform Judaism as:

> . . . not a concession to mere convenience. It is the logical and inevitable result of historical development. It is the expression of the modern Jew's harmonization of what is essential in Judaism with modern thought as it speaks in modern democracy, in modern emphasis of the ethical element of religion, in modern deepening of the sense of history, in modern humanitarianism, and lastly, in modern liberalism.[270]

Like many Reformers of the day, he continued with the unbridled optimism of the earliest Reform leaders, proclaiming that only Reform could save modern Jews by catapulting them into the modern era, harmonizing their Jewish life with the new demands of contemporary life. More specifically, he saw Reform principles as a ". . . liberal attitude toward our sacred heritage which distinguished its central ideas from the particular expression of them in any symbol, ceremony, ritual law

or institution."[271] He further claimed that a progressive view of Judaism did not alter the essential elements of the religion, including beliefs, ideals, emphasis on Law, and identification with Israel. He was quick to place Reform in the context and authenticity of historical Judaism, as a new, unique creation within the framework of the past. For him, Reform was "thoroughly loyal, but at the same time liberal."[272] In advocating the establishment of Sunday services early in his tenure at Beth-El, he viewed the Sunday service as representative of Reform's approach to changing the needs and demands with new ideas and possible responses. Thus, the Sunday service, as a supplement to Shabbat services, was "the mirror which reflects the tendency of progressive Judaism."[273] Such adaptations were the proper manifestation of the historical religion as a Judaism which included a law of origin, growth, development and change. And yet, even in the earliest days of his career, Schulman's ambivalence seemed to moderate his celebration of Reform. He bemoaned the loss of beauty of the "olden Judaism" which he knew as a child, and the indifference that had accompanied some of Reform's changes. He was far from blind even in those earliest days concerning the inadequacies of Reform. Speaking of these inadequacies, he stated that he was:

> . . . sadly aware that in the process of reform much which deserves the attachment of the Jewish heart was swept away. How could it have been otherwise? Gentle

> iconoclasm is the rarest of arts. Rarely is the zeal of the reformer congruous with a deep piety . . . in the emphasis upon Judaism as a world-religion, the value of what was beautiful in the olden Judaism, the indispensability of pieties of the home were here and there lost sight of. To admit this is but to admit the limitations of human nature, or to use a rabbinical phrase, 'the messenger cannot perform two tasks at once.' But in the main, progressive Judaism has meant rejuvenation.[274]

Although Schulman seemed at times, to resolve this tension which raged within him concerning his analysis of Reform Judaism, such resolution was perhaps only temporary. In the middle and later years of his career, his recognition of Reform's inadequacies dimmed his enthusiasm. He began to see more and deeper problems with Reform, which true to his nature, he made no attempt to conceal. He never rejected Reform Judaism, however, choosing instead to be an internal critic. His expression of a clear recognition of Reform's strengths and weaknesses, however, were grounded in a thorough-going love and commitment to the principles of Reform. He criticized in order to call attention to the changes which he believed must be made. Thus, in characteristic outspoken fashion, he began to describe the Reform's weaknesses, as well as its strengths. As early as 1912, he spoke of the great influence of Reform which had touched even Orthodox Judaism. He showed pride in what he considered Reform's strengths: harmonization of the fundamental elements of Judaism with modern demands, emphasis of religion against nationality,

emphasis of the ethical life as against the ceremonial, and the revitalization of Judaism.

> In all these things . . . with all these elements of strength, this great movement showed that Judaism was a living faith. Judaism never survived as a petrification, but it was always a living organism, therefore capable of assimilating whatever is good in its environment.[275]

But Schulman did not overlook the weaknesses, which he described as concomitants of the strengths. He enumerated those weaknesses as: an unbridled individualism leading to the breakdown of authority, abandonment of the beauty of ceremony particularly in the home, indifference to symbol, and weakening of the spiritual life. In his criticism, he called for an inculcation of reverence for heritage to instill respect for authority, a more open approach to symbol and ritual, the reconsecration of the home through sabbath and holiday practice, and recognition of the ethical value of the ceremony or symbol.[276] In the later years of his life, Schulman's criticism increased, as he chastized Reform for the deficiencies which he believed it had taken no steps to eliminate. He echoed his earlier views, adding his charge that despite the fine work of rational, critical and cleansing thought, Reform had failed to "call forth a well-knitted philosophy of its new interpretation of Jewish life."[277] He saw even in the strength of rationalism, the weakness of a complete lack of mysticism, which for him, best

illustrated the creative power of religion.[278] Thus, Reform had been somewhat disillusioning, failing to accomplish all that it had set out to do. By the 1920's, impatient with Reform's tardiness, and preoccupied with the battle of Zionism, Schulman's energies were turned from the Reform movement to the new task of emphasizing the need for RELIGIOUS Judaism. The differences between Reform and Orthodox Judaism paled in importance as compared to the great battle against indifference and spiritual apathy.[279] Outspokenly, he began to question the wisdom of the tearing down which Reform had begun without the initiation of anything in its place. He called for a positive replacement of what Reform had swept away:

> . . . after all, the work of this modern movement was, in the main, negative. It swept away superstitions. It rationalized, it emancipated, it adjusted, it removed burdens, it attempted to make the inherited religion easier for men . . . The dominant tendency of it was necessarily breaking down, clearing away. And as the Talmud says, no angel can perform two functions, the one who performs the work of destruction is rarely fitted to perform the work of construction. To-day we need something entirely different. We need a strengthening and deepening of our religion.[280]

By the time of his later years in the active rabbinate, so disturbed was he by the rising tide of Zionism and secular Judaism, that Schulman's driving energies had turned away from parochial issues of Reform to what he considered a new chapter in the history of Judaism in the western world. He urgently proclaimed the promulgation

of religious Judaism, with heightened emphasis on a God-centered Judaism. He asserted that

> What above all we must do is to rediscover God, to deepen Jewish insight, and to foster the Jewish spiritual life. To me today, while I belong to the so-called Reform party, these distinctions mean comparatively little . . . I stand for a more clear-cut religious Judaism than many who are in the so-called Conservative camp. To me what is most important is the preservation of Jewish religious values.[281]

Indeed, such a new chapter in modern Jewish history with its de-emphasis of party was what Schulman desired in order to make gains in the beleagured fight against secular and/or nationalistic Judaism. Appealing to Jews of all religious parties, he withdrew even further from a complete embrace of Reform Judaism. Religious parties, Reform included, with their narrow parochial claims and unfulfilled aspirations had outlived their greatest usefulness. By the close of his career, the reclamation of religious values for Judaism cut across all party lines, and created an atmosphere which was not conducive to the kind of triumphalist attitude which so many other Reform leaders had displayed, but which Schulman had never embraced.

Schulman was also unique as a Reform rabbi in a prominent Reform pulpit for his attitude toward tradition. As his views on the usefulness of ceremony and ritual as symbols for the moral law might indicate, Schulman was no classical Reform rabbi. He held a life-time conviction

concerning the deep power and beauty of Jewish tradition. His prime criticisms of Reform came from his perception that in abandoning the worst elements of traditional Judaism, it had also destroyed the spark of beauty which tradition offered. His conviction, no doubt was rooted in the Orthodox childhood in which he was raised. But unlike many other Reform rabbis who repudiated their traditional backgrounds, Schulman's attitude consistently displayed the warm feeling with which he regarded the best of that tradition. He was almost singular as a Reform rabbi who enjoyed quoting Talmud in his sermons and addresses, and even in the fledgling days of his career in the 1890's, emphasized the need for specific Jewish forms and value-emblems which only tradition, albeit modified, could provide.[282] Inspired by the rich heritage which he viewed as the Jewish birthright, he desired even in the modification of traditional practice to modern needs, that the beauty and depth of that tradition be preserved as its essence. He encouraged the embracing of that past in order to more fully respond to the future:

> . . . yesterday is in our blood and in our soul. Life is a rush of the creative yesterday through the fleeting to-day into the richer tomorrow. A wise life does not self-sufficiently and anarchically begin with the present. It utilizes the past for the future.[283]

Schulman decried the relative indifference to the value of tradition which Reform had fostered. He believed that Reform had simply gone too far in casting away ceremony and symbol, making the synagogue and especially the Jewish home a veritable spiritual wasteland. This was perhaps one of his strongest criticisms of Reform, no doubt contributing to his growing ambivalence of the movement:

> Reform Judaism for its rationalizing tendency paid a price. It sacrificed much of what is beautiful in tradition. It destroyed many values. Today I think only in terms of a Judaism without any adjective, a Judaism which is greater than any party within Judaism . . . Reform Judaism has perhaps gone too far in casting away symbols and ceremonies which were necessary for the expression of the individuality of Judaism.[284]

Perhaps Schulman believed his to be a lone voice crying out in the wilderness. His concern for a warmer approach to tradition and ceremony in Reform seemed to fall on deaf ears. Although he could not know it then, he seemed to anticipate the monumental changes and turn which his movement would make only decades later. In the eventual decline of classical Reform and the subsequent rise of a more traditional neo-Reform Judaism, Schulman would perhaps have been satisfied with the new warm attitude to tradition which the classical Reform of his day eschewed.

Yet another interesting facet of Schulman's ideas of Reform emerged in his changing view of authority in

the Reform movement. With the abrogation of Halacha as the standard of authority, the need seemed to arise for some standard to replace it. In the wake of a disappointment in Reform's inability to engender a spiritual revival in the last decades of the nineteenth century, many Reformers were calling for a synod and/or promulgation of a creed in order to provide some standard for authority for belief within Reform. There seemed to be not a monolithic Reform movement, but a plethora of many different ideas and practices.

> In the opinion of many rabbis, this sad situation was largely due to lack of order and clarity in Reform Judaism. Its tenets were not clearly defined; moreover, different rabbis had widely divergent standards in matters of practice--Sabbath observance, for example, and marriage rules--and this situation was bound to weaken the will to observance and to lower the dignity of Judaism.[285]

Thus, many Reform leaders desired the establishment of a Synod, with the formulation of Reform belief as the unifying standard for the entire movement. Samuel Schulman did not respond favorably in those early days to any kind of external imposition of beliefs or practices on himself or any other Reform Jew. After the 1904 Central Conference of American Rabbis near-deadlock vote on the institution of a synod, Schulman brought a minority report against the synod in 1905. He questioned not only the advisability and effectiveness of such a synod, but called into question the very conditions which its

proponents claimed to exist that necessitated such a synod.

> I am opposed to the idea of the establishment of such a body. I vote negatively on the Synod because I assert that there is no anarchy in American Judaism, which seems to be the opinion of some . . . If it is said that the Synod is necessary in order to bring to bear a certain amount of authority upon certain members who need faith, I say you do not need a Synod for that. The Synod would not bring about that which is expected from it, the putting an end to anarchy. The Synod that has no power to enforce its decision cannot bring an end to this supposed condition of affairs . . . I prefer to be a heretic in catholic Israel, and to trust my own mind, rather than endorse the platform or creed of any organization that tries to impose its beliefs upon me.[286]

Schulman considered antithetical to the values and ideals of Reform any central standardization of belief or practice. He continued to vigorously oppose even the slightest attempt to impose authority. He opposed the creation of a minister's handbook to include halachot for guidance to the Reform rabbi. He likened such rules of guidance to the devising of a new Shulchan Aruch and suggested that when rabbis were in need of guidance, they might write to other rabbis of greater experience and solicit their opinions to help them arrive at decisions.[287] His sensitivity to any published rules in written form as the first step in the imposition of authority extended even to an outline for the teaching of Confirmation class (for rabbis), proposed by the Central Conference. This too, he regarded as a serious issue of authority, tantamount to the

formulation of principles and a catechism, of sorts. He warned that it would severely limit the freedom of the individual rabbi, putting him on the defensive against this one standard as to the teaching of his own class.[288] Shortly thereafter, however, Schulman began to modify some of his views on authority. He began moving towards the very positions which he had so articulately opposed less than a decade earlier. One of his growing dissatisfactions with Reform was the thorough individualism which it fostered, resulting in the breakdown of authority in Israel. He began to warn of the dangers of this anarchy which he now recognized. Although he had not yet moved to the establishment of authority through a standardized belief or practice, he was now cognizant of a problem which he warned constituted a growing danger. Such a concern continued to grow, and by the final years of his career, Schulman had come full circle and now supported some kind of statement of principles for the Reform movement. In fact, it was he who single-handedly drafted a Statement of Principles which he hoped the Central Conference of American Rabbis would adopt. A Samuel Schulman who at one time had bitterly rejected any written statement of guidelines for rabbinic use was now composing guidelines for the entire Reform movement. A rabbi who at one time disdained any imposition of authority upon the individual Jew's free will now

devoted a full section of his "Statement of Principles" to the very issue of Authority:

> To strengthen Judaism, there must be a due proportion between liberty of the individual and respect for authority. The problem of modern life is to find a harmonious relation between the two. Without authority liberty becomes license and anarchy is destructive of human society. Without liberty authority becomes tyranny and is destructive of life's supreme value, the freedom of the individual soul.[289]

Over the many years and experiences of his career, Schulman had come to temper his fervor for pure individual freedom with the counteracting need for some authority. He called for a balance between two opposing, but equally fundamental ideas. He therefore called for a balance through the resolution of the indivdiual conscience as the final determiner, but only with the understanding that each individual would seek guidance with a healthy respect for Judaism's heritage, and for pronouncements of a rabbinical body which represented Israel. He viewed such a resolution as dynamic, emphasizing authority more in times of excessive liberty (such as he perceived his era) and magnifying liberty in times of excessive authority.[290]

Due to the development of his views on authority, Samuel Schulman was engaged in the project of drafting a statement of guidelines for Reform Judaism in the early years of his retirement from the active rabbinate. Initially, Schulman presented a thorough summary of his thought in his paper on "Israel" at the 1935 Central Conference of American Rabbis gathering in Chicago. It held:

> . . . with glowing conviction the view that Israel is not merely one of the nations. Israel is, rather, said Schulman, the KENESETH ISRAEL, with a unique function in the divine economy, the function of demonstrating the fulfillment of the law in the religious sense. The paper is virtually a complete sketch of Jewish theology organized around the concept of the election of Israel.[291]

As an outgrowth of this presentation and the discussion it elicited, Schulman was appointed chairman of a committee to draft a statement of principles on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the monumental "Pittsburgh Platform." Over the course of the following two years, Schulman took ill and resigned from the committee's chair due to his health. He had, however, continued to work, individually, with the resulting proposal authored singly by him. In the meantime, the Committee had continued to work despite its decline from the initial eleven to six members. Under the direction of Samuel Cohon who developed the ultimately adopted statement, now called the "Columbus Platform," the Committee formulated its own platform. On the eve of the 1937 Conference in which Cohon's statement was accepted over Schulman's, Schulman decried the Cohon platform as a "brief, emotionless statement." He charged that it was incomplete, convinced that it was "vapid and ineffectual."[292] Schulman came to the Conference that year ready for a fight, embittered by his perception that the committee had ignored him during his illness. The

fight for his platform grew into a complex series of events, encompassing a wide-range of political and personal animosities to complicate the already emotion-charged theological issues. From Schulman's perspective, the entire matter had become a deeply personal one for him. He perceived that he had been mistreated, and that his statement had been rejected for an inferior articulation of views. He had poured his very heart into this work as his final great and lasting contribution to modern American Jewry. In the end, he was deeply saddened not only because his work had been rejected, but more because the many issues for which he had spent a lifetime struggling had been superceded. He was troubled at the pervading tendency reflected in the adopted statement of a Judaism which was primarily nationalistic instead of religious and theological. This fundamental principle had been the centerpiece of his teachings and the inspiration for his untiring crusade for nearly a half-century, and now he began to see the final battle lost from under him. It must have been a terrible upset for Schulman, disheartening him to a great degree, for he never engaged in any large undertaking after the disappointment over his "Statement of Principles."

In examining his Guideline, one is filled with a real awareness of the thorough knowledge and talent which Schulman possessed in the theological and philosophical

realm. His Statement is a clear, commanding expression of his belief with the intention of inspiring the reader. It is noteworthy that in his later career with its emphasis not on party, but on unity of the religious ideal in Judaism, that Schulman does not utilize the word "Reform" in a single place. Even the title is a statement for the MODERN Jew. Other outstanding characteristics include the obvious centrality of a religious Judaism. Indeed, he stated that ". . . the conception of its (Israel's) religious function is indispensable. My statement, the whole spirit of it from beginning to end, is aimed against Humanists and against Jewish Secular Nationalists."[293] His Statement reflected the basic underpinning of his entire religious thought to which he so tenaciously clung throughout his life: the centrality of God and the fundamental religious nature of Judaism and of Israel. In addition, Schulman included his original contributions concerning the conception of Israel as an Ecclesia, a religious group, and concerning his conception of Torah as the divinely revealed Torah of the Prophets. His platform depicts him as the classical Reformer in his opposition to Zionism as antithetical to the religious foundation of Israel, in its celebration of America, and in its rejection of a personal Messiah. On the other hand, his platform is such a radical departure from that classicism in his views on the value of ceremony

in the discipline for the obligations of the moral law, in its call for a re-education of Jewish home life through ritual and its warm approach to tradition, and in its appeal for authority. His Platform reveals a universal outlook in comfortable co-existence with a call for the reform of Reform so as to strengthen its spiritual content, and increase its effectiveness as a modern force responding to the changing demands of Jewish life. Although his Statement was rejected, the Conference recognized the monumental task which Schulman had accomplished and the historic value of such a statement of principles, for it took the unprecedented move of including the Schulman Statement in the published proceedings of the yearbook. Schulman's "Statement of Principles for the Guidance of the Modern Jew" serves as a lasting tribute to his energy, enthusiasm, talent and intellectual prowess. Although he may have perceived its rejection as the final defeat of his ideas, much of what he included is still alive as controversial and important topics for consideration a half-century later. The questions which he raised and the battles which he fought regarding such fundamental and critical issues of the nature of Judaism, the call for a religious revival, the nature of a Jewish state to the Diaspora, and the role of ceremony in Reform Jewish life are the issues with which Reform is currently struggling. Even the issues such as a Jewish state and

spiritual questions which may have seemed outmoded to those who defeated Schulman's statement have re-emerged as the critical philosophical debates of today. As such, Schulman's thought anticipated much of the contemporary dilemmas found in Reform Judaism, and if for no other reason, render his thought valuable for the issues which the movement faces today.

## CHAPTER V

## SAMUEL SCHULMAN: SUMMARY OF HIS LIFE AND HIS THOUGHTS

Samuel Schulman was one of Reform Judaism's most intellectual, articulate spokesmen. Brought to the United States in 1868 at the age of four, Schulman enthusiastically adopted America as his new home. Upon reaching adulthood, Schulman became familiar with the Reform movement, for which he would later serve as a great leader and theologian. He attended City College of New York, the University of Berlin, and received his rabbinic training at the Hochschule fuer die Wissenschaft des Judenthums. Schulman returned to this country, serving small congregations in New York City and Helena, Montana before serving Congregation B'nai Jehuda in Kansas City, Missouri. After six years there, Schulman settled in New York City once again, serving as the associate rabbi of Temple Beth-El. He assumed the position of senior rabbi when Kaufman Kohler was named to the presidency of Hebrew Union College, and remained at Beth-El until it consolidated with Temple Emanu-El in 1927. Schulman retired from the active rabbinate in 1935 but remained active in the Central Conference of American Rabbis for whom he served as a past President (1911-1913) and as Honorary

President (1934). It was during his later years that he best articulated his comprehensive statements of his theology and religious thought in his 1935 Central Conference presentation entitled "Israel," and in his 1937 proposed "Statement of Principles for the Guidance of the Modern Jew," which was rejected by the C.C.A.R. as its updated platform of principles at its 1937 Columbus gathering. These two monumental works attest to the vigorous intellectual, theological, and oratorical skills which distinguish Schulman's illustrious rabbinic career spanning more than a half century of service.

Schulman's three great pillars of religious thought were his strong sense of Americanism, his firm belief in a religious Israel, and most important, his deep and penetrating conviction of God. God stood at the very core of Schulman's religious thought, influencing nearly every area of his philosophy. He celebrated the Jewish conception of God as the highest development in the history of religion, describing its zealous guarding of the purely spiritual, unimaged God. He regarded Judaism's fusion of God's transcendent and immanent characteristics as its unique genius which no other religion could ever match. Schulman viewed the world through a God-centered focus, rejecting any philosophy which did not include God. As a result, he demonstrated no tolerance for the variety

of secular expressions that were popular in his day. Characteristically, his public reaction to such secularism took on an unequivocal, emphatic tone of rejection. In particular, he held in disdain humanism, ethical culture, and atheism. In an era when such secular expressions made inroads into the religious enterprise, Schulman bemoaned the absence of firm commitment to religion by American Jews. As a result, under the auspices of the Association of Reform Rabbis of New York, he endeavored to initiate large-scale mass revival meetings. His efforts were not successful and the revival meetings did not take place. He firmly asserted that a strong belief in God eventuated in an intellectual effect of rationalism, a moral effect of an ethical life, and a social effect of an orientation to the present and the importance of this world. Schulman also believed that another of Judaism's great contributions to religion was the fusion of the ethical with the religious. He taught that with the purely spiritual God upon which Judaism insisted, the best way to have knowledge of God was through living an ethical life. He was a firm believer in the inexorable unity of ethics and religion, and therefore fought vigorously to prevent the secular teaching of ethics in the public schools.

Schulman viewed Law as another principle of Judaism. He found no contradiction between his firm belief in law

as a discipline for life and his position as a Reform Rabbi. His theology embraced divine revelation, but not in its traditional conception of Torah. Instead, he viewed divine law as the moral law revealed by the Prophets. Thus, when he spoke of the Torah of God, he identified that divine teaching (Torah) with the Prophets and their moral imperatives. Within this framework, the Reform Jew was enabled to speak in the same terms as other Jews, echoing the claim of divine revelation in the Torah, meaning for him, the Prophets. Schulman's most interesting understanding of Law was demonstrated in his views of ritual and ceremony. Unlike most classical Reform Jews with whom he shared so many characteristics, Schulman viewed tradition with great favor. Although he did not include ritual law under the rubric of divine revelation, nonetheless, he taught that it served as an excellent tool to discipline a person for the rigors which the moral life demanded. In addition, he believed that ceremony served as the necessary symbol which any religion needed, and which Judaism lacked in its absence of dogma and its purely spiritual image of God. He insisted that ritual led to the moral, and as such, was an essential element of religion that Reform had ignored for far too long. He often called for a return to the warm ceremonies of tradition, as well as the creation of new symbols in an effort to reverse the tide of

assimilation. For him, the pendulum had swung too far to a classical Reform extreme of universalism. He taught that ceremony could serve to return particular Jewish elements to the modern Jew, and thus attain a more balanced perspective.

The third principle of Schulman's theology was the Jew's indomitable, eternal hope. Such a hope enabled the Jew to weather difficult times and events throughout his history. Schulman's understanding of Jewish optimism included the Jewish view of Messianism. He did not subscribe to a personal Messiah, but instead spoke in classical Reform terms of the messianic era. Schulman advised that the essence of Jewish messianism was its constant forward look, and in contrast with Christianity, its potential rather than its realization. Such an optimism was more valuable as the means to continued progress and hope than it was as a certain expectation. In addition to this driving force of messianic hope, Schulman also vigorously maintained the principle of Israel's mission and divine election in his comprehensive theology. While other liberal Jewish religious thinkers were abandoning the notion of divine election, Schulman celebrated it in every aspect of his thought. For him, it served as the very justification of Judaism's continued existence. The Mission idea inexorably bound Schulman's theology with his view of Israel as a religious entity.

Throughout his career, Schulman held firmly to the conviction that Judaism was primarily of a religious nature. He recognized in Judaism the fusion of historical descent and religion, yet he vigorously insisted that the aspect of peoplehood or community was always to be subordinated to the principal attribute of religion. Thus, Israel was a distinct group, but only because of its religious nature and the common values shared by all Jews through the teachings of their religion. He could not countenance any expression of Judaism that was not of a religious nature, often rejecting what he called racial and nationalistic conceptions of Israel. Specifically, he opposed the idea of Judaism as a civilization advanced by Mordecai Kaplan, and as well, rejected the Zionist philosophy of a Jewish nation. He charged that such secular Jewish ideas emptied Israel of its historical significance and debased Israel's divine purpose to the lowly status of a tribal solidarity. Schulman opposed any attempt which he believed would make Israel like any other secular nation because he believed that Israel was uniquely animated by a holy purpose and consecrated by God. Therefore, he spoke of Israel not as a nation, but as an "historic religious community." He maintained that following the Roman destruction of the Jewish Commonwealth, Judaism ceased to be an ordinary people with national limits and was transformed into a religious

community with a unique purpose, destined by its mission to live throughout the world. In 1906, he claimed historical support for this conception of Israel, siezing upon the Midrashic term, "Keneseth Israel" as the rabbinic awareness of Israel's unique status. Schulman zealously attempted to foster this concept and this term throughout his life.

With peoplehood subordinated to the insistence on Israel's unique religious identity, Schulman's conception of the nature of Judaism came into direct conflict with Zionism as a philosophy. As early as 1896, preceding the first Zionist Congress, Schulman had publicly disavowed early Zionist theories. Such opposition continued to grow as he became a noted opponent of Zionism for the rest of his life. He perceived himself to be one of the few stable and unwavering non-Zionists in the East. Despite the criticism leveled upon him for his opposition, Schulman held steadfastly to his principles, refusing to modify or abandon them even in the face of prominent opposition. He was driven in his rejection of Zionism by his strong sense of Americanism and his belief that Zionism was incompatible with Reform Judaism and its hard-earned gains of emancipation. His primary motivation for his vehement rejection of Zionism, however, is found in his conception of Israel as a unique religious community and its great ideological contrast

with the secular, national aspirations of Zionism. He best summarized the philosophical gulf between secular Zionism and his religious view of Israel when he stated that the Zionists attempted to make Jews "Ka-Goyim," like the nations, and the religionists desired for Jews to be "Ba-Goyim," among the nations. This was more than a mere play on the Hebrew language; indeed, it was the driving force and ideological source for the long and demanding polemic which Schulman waged against Zionism throughout his career. Despite his noted outspoken opposition to Zionism, Schulman was a strong proponent of Palestinian development for the settlement of persecuted Jews. His deeply imbedded sense of ahavat yisrael, the love of Jews, overcame his philosophical distaste when it became a practical matter for a better life for his oppressed brethren. Schulman spoke out favoring Palestinian development at the very early date of 1914, continuing his support for the rest of his life. He served as a non-Zionist member of the Council of the Jewish Agency from its organization in 1929. While he was vigorous in his anti-Zionist polemic, Schulman rarely took a position which he believed could possibly do damage to the cause of the resettlement of Jews in Palestine. As a result, he declined to protest the Balfour Declaration and authored the Central Conference of American Rabbis' response to the British Mandate

coupling a firm rejection of Zionist ideology with forceful support of Palestinian development and Jewish immigration. In his last years, Schulman became even more vigorous in his concern for Jewish refugees, urging that ideological passions be temporarily suspended by Zionist and non-Zionist alike, in order that at least a half million Jews be enabled to resettle in Palestine through the aid of American Jewry. Schulman's vigorous support of Palestinian development further established that his rejection of Zionism was primarily for philosophical reasons. He looked upon Zionist ideology with disdain because of its attempt to commit all Jews to the doctrine that Palestine was THE homeland for THE Jewish people. He stated on more than one occasion that had the Zionists eliminated the simple word "the" from their program, intending instead to find "a" homeland for (some) Jews instead of the homeland for "the" Jewish people, then he would have gladly become a Zionist. Since this idea was antithetical to his entire belief structure, Schulman could not keep himself from the intellectual, philosophical, and ideological rejection of its aims. In his final years, Schulman's ideas remained consistent, although he began to view himself in the difficult position of neither Zionist nor anti-Zionist, choosing to reject membership in the American Council for Judaism. In his 1935 paper on "Israel," Schulman called for a

religious synthesis of the non-Zionists and Zionists position, urging that the Reform movement consider Palestine a field for its service and bring the much needed message of liberal, modern Judaism to its Jews.

In addition to his theological foundations and his religious view of Israel, Schulman also wove into his religion a strong sense of Americanism. He believed that America was the model or representative nation for the world in its emphasis on the individual over the group. He praised America's basis of principle over European preoccupation with racial or national background. As a result, Schulman saw American democracy as a nearly sacred structure by which the Jews were afforded the greatest opportunity in their entire history to realize their full potential. Schulman's celebration of Americanism was indeed an integral part of his religious system, as he spoke with pride of being an American by nationality and a Jew by religion. He preceeded Israel Zangwill's coinage of the term "melting pot" by a year in attempting to describe the structure and ethos of American life.

Schulman was an energetic proponent for the separation of Church and State. This was yet another principle of the American genius and he did not look kindly on any compromise of it. As a result, he successfully opposed several attempts to introduce religion into

the public schools, either through the reading of the Bible, through the teaching of any religion whatsoever, or even through ethical instruction.

He was also outspoken and less than delicate in his analysis of Christianity. He often charged Christian leaders with ineffectiveness, placing responsibility with them as the majority faith for many societal ills. He further chastised even liberal Christianity for the poor treatment of Jews worldwide, citing them with ingratitude to the mother religion. Schulman viewed the two primary differences between Christianity and Judaism in their contrasting views of Messiah and of salvation. He challenged their orientations as unproductively avoiding the present, pointing to the Messianic deliverance rooted in the past, and a transcendent salvation tied to a future life. He held that Judaism's present-oriented view of salvation and future hope of messianic realization were more productive for the Western mind.

In addition to what he considered theological inadequacies of Christianity, Schulman was an outspoken critic of anti-Semitism. He often reviewed a number of books with an anti-Semitic tone, demonstrating the rare combination of penetrating scholarly insight with the ability to convey his message in a popular medium to the masses. His polemic against anti-Semitism was

more than merely a Jew's defense of his religion. Indeed, he held that anti-Semitism challenged the values of Americanism, demonstrating a regression to race hatred, mob tyranny, and religious bigotry.

Unlike many Reform rabbis of his day, Samuel Schulman was not radical in his ideas of Reform nor did he repudiate sincere traditional Judaism. Such an ambivalence is apparent in his prolific writings, sermons, and addresses. While he enthusiastically embraced Reform in its approach to changing needs of the modern Jew, he was less than comfortable with its thorough abandonment of ritual and ceremonial tradition. He was most aware of Reform's inadequacies, emphasizing them on occasion in an effort to criticize from within and effect improvement. In his later years, the recognition of those inadequacies diminished his enthusiasm for Reform, as he decried the breakdown of authority which Reform Judaism engendered, the desolation of the Jewish home through the absence of ceremony, the indifference to symbol, and the weakening of the spiritual life. By the middle of his rabbinic career, disappointed with Reform's weaknesses, and preoccupied with the battle of secular Zionism, Schulman turned his attention away from the Reform movement to the task of promoting the cause of RELIGIOUS Judaism.

Rabbi Samuel Schulman's career produced important and stimulating ideas, even for contemporary Reform Jews living nearly a half century later. His brilliant theological mind and keen philosophical grasp of complex issues can be matched by few. He brought to every problem a great mind matched with vigorous energy and an outspoken fearlessness to tackle the great difficulties that faced him. Beyond the personal characteristics that marked his ideas, however, Schulman's thought remains valuable for further contemporary study in the problems, difficulties, and issues currently faced which he anticipated some fifty years ago. His polemic against Zionism provides insight into the present unresolved and fluctuating state of Israeli-Diaspora relations. In addition, Schulman's warm view of tradition and his positive inclination toward ceremony and ritual which distinguished him from so many classical Reform colleagues of his day anticipated the subsequent return to tradition that marks the trend of neo-Reform Judaism. His calls for a religious revival, for spiritual concerns, and for investigation of the role of ceremony remain as critical issues confronting Reform Jews today. Samuel Schulman's thought thus transcends the historical conditions of his era and his life. It can serve as a valuable resource for contemporary, and even future Reform Jews in arriving at their ever-changing definition

of Reform Judaism through an exploration, confrontation and resolution of important issues they face in modern Jewish life. Such was Schulman's approach, such is his legacy.

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