
TITLE JOSEPH RAUCH: A BIOGRAPHICAL STUDY

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Joseph Rauch: A Biographical Study

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Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Ordination
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Referee, Professor Gary P. Zola, PhD.

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Title: Joseph Rauch: A Biographical Study
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This thesis is a biographical study of Rabbi Dr. Joseph Rauch (1880-1957), who was a prominent rabbi in the American Reform Movement during the first half of the twentieth century. Ordained in 1905, he served only two congregations throughout the 52 years of his rabbinate. For seven years he served as rabbi of Mt. Sinai Congregation in Sioux City, Iowa. The remainder of his rabbinate was spent in Louisville, Kentucky, serving Temple Adath Israel. Rauch's career in the American Reform Movement was noteworthy particularly because of its remarkable duration. His rabbinate was focused not only on the synagogues he served, but also on the wider community. His influence was felt in the Jewish community locally, nationally, and internationally. Rauch also played significant roles in the political and civic arenas at home and across the nation. Because of the commitment Rauch displayed toward his congregation and to the wider community in Louisville, Kentucky, many of his nationally, and internationally, significant activities have gone virtually unnoticed. This thesis provides a biographical overview of Rabbi Rauch's life and his more than half century long career. This study is based on a wide array of primary source material, including his sermons, essays, the minutes of organizations and causes to which he was committed, congregational records, and oral histories by people who remember him. On the basis of these data, I have sought to provide a historical analysis of the different aspects of his life, his activities in the congregation and Louisville, his involvement in national and international organizations, and his scholarship in order to add greater depth to any understanding of Joseph Rauch as an individual and of the model of the rabbinate that he created.. As a

case study, Rauch's career enhances our understanding of American Reform Judaism as well as religious life in America during the first half of the 20th century.

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With love, I dedicate this work to Debbie.

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Introduction

Joseph Rauch (1880-1957) was one of the best known Jewish leaders in Kentucky and a leading figure in the American Reform rabbinate during the first half of the twentieth century. Ordained in 1905, he served only two congregations throughout the 52 years of his rabbinate. For seven years he served as rabbi of Mt. Sinai Congregation in Sioux City, Iowa. The remainder of his rabbinate was spent in Louisville, Kentucky, serving Temple Adath Israel. Over the course of his long tenure in Louisville, Rauch earned a national reputation in the American Reform rabbinate. His career focused not only on the synagogues he served, but on the wider community as well. His influence was felt in the Jewish community locally, nationally, and internationally. Rauch also played significant roles in the political and civic arenas at home and across the nation.

Rauch lived during a period of history, American, Jewish, and world history, that can be compared to no other time. The 52 years during which Rauch served as a rabbi in the United States were witness to the most significant events that the Jewish People have known in recent centuries. The Jews, worldwide, were a part of the largest human migration that the modern era has known. In a search for freedom to live as free people, many Jews attempted to flee the oppression of Eastern Europe by migrating to the United States. The effects of this migration rippled throughout the Jewish world. This migration, along with the two World Wars, the Holocaust, the establishment of the State of Israel, the Great Depression and many other events, set the stage upon which Joseph Rauch led the Jewish communities for which he worked to seek a progressive religious connection to the world around them.

As an American rabbi, Rauch sought to deal with the plight of the Jewish People by teaching the prophetic ideals that embodied Reform Judaism's teaching about the Mission of Israel¹ to his own congregation. From there he sought to elevate his flock to the type of action that would ignite social justice and communal worship throughout the local community and beyond. Throughout Rauch's rabbinate, he clearly worked within three distinct spheres. Those spheres were his congregation and local community, organizations and causes on a national level, and his pursuits on the international stage. Rauch worked diligently to ensure freedom for all people, all the while trying to bridge the world with the ideals of modern progressive monotheistic religion.

This thesis provides a historical analysis of Joseph Rauch's rabbinate on the basis of the extant biographical data on his life. The first chapter serves to reconstruct Rauch's biography. By researching the congregations he served, the activities in which he participated, and other institutions with which Rauch was involved, a basis for understanding the environment in which he operated emerges. This broad overview of Rauch's life provides a launching point for subsequent chapters.

The second chapter focuses specifically on Rauch as a pulpit rabbi. This chapter examines the relationship Rauch developed with the lay leadership and the temple program he provided for the congregation. Chapter two also looks closely at the religious school that Rauch administered. By analyzing the prominent aspects of Rauch's pulpit rabbinate, concentrating on what he emphasized in his congregation, a greater understanding of Rauch's own concept of the American *rabbi* emerges.

¹The concept of the *Mission of Israel* implies that Israel as a People was to spread the word of *Torah*, and God's teaching, throughout the world. See Michael Meyer, *Response to Modernity* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1995), 137-38.

Chapter three explores various aspects of Rauch's rabbinate that were neither directly linked to the congregation nor to the locality in which he lived. Specifically, this chapter focuses on Rauch's participation in the founding of the World Union for Progressive Judaism. Chapter three also examines Rauch's involvement in the Central Conference of American Rabbis and several committees in which he was an active participant. By studying these organizations, and Rauch's other activities beyond the walls of the congregation, it is possible to provide a more comprehensive picture of Rauch's rabbinate.

Finally, the fourth chapter looks closely at Rauch's own words. Through his sermons, lectures and essays, Rauch's belief system and ideology become apparent. That which he preached to his congregation and wrote for his colleagues' consumption completes the picture of Rauch as a rabbi.

Joseph Rauch was a beloved rabbi of a significant Reform Jewish community in the central southern United States. His life and career provide a useful case study that illuminates our understanding of religious life in the United States in general, and in the Reform movement in particular, during the first five decades of the last. By studying the different aspects of his life, his activities in the congregation and Louisville, his involvement in national and international organizations, and his scholarship, it is possible to gain a more nuanced conception of Joseph Rauch as an individual, of Reform Judaism and the religious environment during the first half of the twentieth century, and of the model of the rabbinate that Rauch created.

Chapter 1

A memorial statement upon Joseph Rauch's death describes his life's work: "His activities would comprise a minor directory of important philanthropic, religious, cultural and civic activities in which he took a vital part. No worthy movement or cause, indeed that needed furthering or championing but could claim his interest, his time, his energy."² The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the life of Joseph Rauch,³ and the environment in which he lived. The primary sources of information that give insight into the life and work of Rauch come from the material found in the Joseph Rauch Papers held in the American Jewish Archives⁴ and the collection housed in the Frances Shapiro-Weitzenhoffer Archives.⁵ In addition to these, a short description of Rauch's work in Louisville can be found in *Adath Louisville* by Herman Landau.

Rauch's rabbinate began in 1905 upon ordination and ended upon his death in 1957. Rauch prided himself on being a rabbi of the people. His life and work intersected with a wide range of community and institutions. Rauch served the entire community, Jew and Gentile alike, not just the dues paying members of his congregation. His activities went far beyond religious matters.

Andrew Broaddus, the mayor of Louisville, said of Rauch that, "No individual will be more keenly missed."⁶ Joseph Rauch worked ceaselessly throughout his entire adult life to integrate the Jewish world within the wider community. Through his efforts, the secular world came to know the face of a modern rabbi who was as culturally

²*CCAR Yearbook*, LXVII, Page 155.

³According to Herman Landau in *Adath Louisville*, Rabbi Rauch pronounced his own name with a hard sound at the end such as in the Hebrew letter *Chet*.

⁴The American Jewish Archives is one of the largest repositories of American Jewish History in the world. It is housed on the campus of the Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati, Ohio. See WWW.AmericanJewishArchives.org.

⁵The archives of Congregation Adath Israel Brith Shalom in Louisville, Kentucky.

⁶*Louisville Times* 8-19-57.

identified with America as they were. There are signs that demonstrate just how deeply Rauch touched the lives of the people of Louisville. Upon his death, the entire city of Louisville observed official mourning and flags were lowered to half-staff at city hall and at the Jefferson County Courthouse.⁷ He was memorialized communally with the subsequent naming of two local institutions. One was the Rauch Planetarium. The other was the Joseph Rauch School for Retarded Children in New Albany, Indiana.⁸

Rauch was born on December 25, 1880 in Austria. He immigrated with his family to Galveston, Texas, when he was ten years old. Having come to the central United States at such a young age, he ultimately grew up to become as American as any individual born here. Information about his early life is scarce. What is known about Rauch comes from data concerning his vast activities and interests. He began his studies in Cincinnati, at Hebrew Union College⁹ and at the University of Cincinnati¹⁰ in the late 1890s. Throughout his young life, he studied at several institutions including, the University of Chicago, Columbia University, the University of New York, Cambridge University, and the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. In addition to his rabbinic ordination, Rauch received doctorates¹¹ in the Old Testament,¹² Law,¹³ and Divinity.¹⁴

⁷*Louisville Times* 8-19-57.

⁸Herman Landau, *Adath Louisville: The Story of a Jewish Community* (Louisville: H. Landau and Associates: 1981), 33.

⁹The Hebrew Union College (now Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion) was founded in 1875 by I.M. Wise and has become the seminary of the Reform movement. See Samuel Karf, ed. *Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion: At 100 Years* (Cincinnati: HUC Press, 1976).

¹⁰Rauch received his Bachelor's Degree from the University of Cincinnati on December 24, 1904.

¹¹The Certificates of his degrees are held in Flat file 3/9 in the American Jewish Archives.

¹²Rauch earned his doctorate in Old Testament with minors in Sociological Seminarium and History of Philosophy, conferred by the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary on May 30, 1916, for which he wrote a dissertation entitled, "Origin and development of Apocalypse in the Old Testament." The degree, awarded with recognition of the work he had begun at the University of Chicago, was given with the predicate "Summa Cum Laude," the highest academic distinction for such a degree. In recognition of his work, Rauch was asked by the Seminary to act unofficially as an advisor to the faculty in matters pertaining to "Hebraica and Semitics."

Upon his arrival in Louisville in 1912, he met Corinne Rosenfelder, the daughter of Rabbi Emanuel Rosenfelder of Brith Shalom,¹⁵ whom he later married. Corinne Rosenfelder Rauch died in 1919.¹⁶ Rauch subsequently married Etta Rosenfelder¹⁷ on June 17, 1925.¹⁸ Rauch lived the rest of his life in that city, serving the congregation of Adath Israel. In 1942 the congregation awarded him a lifetime contract.¹⁹ Rauch became the public face of Judaism for the citizens of Louisville.²⁰ Physically, Rauch was short, rather thin, and walked with a stoop. He had thin hair and wore glasses. He was a hard worker, frequently beginning his workday at 5 a.m. Rauch is remembered as having a warm disposition. He was considered very approachable.²¹ Rauch did not speak

¹³Rauch earned his Doctor of Laws degree from the University of Kentucky, conferred upon him on May 29th, 1942.

¹⁴Rauch was awarded the Doctor of Divinity degree by the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati on June 24, 1944. On that occasion, Dr. Julian Morgenstern, the president of HUC, said of Rauch, "Rev. Dr. Joseph Rauch, humble, idealistic, self-sacrificing Rabbi and servant of God, of Israel and of mankind, admired and beloved by his colleagues in the American Rabbinate, whose ministry over thirty-nine years has been characterized by sincerity, simplicity and unpretentiousness, by wisdom, foresight and unselfish constructive planning for the upbuilding and strengthening of Jewish congregations throughout his state and for the support of many projects of Jewish welfare and active participant in the founding and strengthening of the World Union for Progressive Judaism, devoted alumnus and servant of the College as president of the Alumni Association and member of its board of Governors."

¹⁵The other Reform congregation in town with which Adath Israel would eventually merge.

¹⁶On August 7, 1919, the Board of Adath Israel Sister adopted the following resolution of respect. "The Board of Adath Israel Sister, Thursday August 7, 1919 on the occasion of the death of Mrs. Joseph Rauch, In the death of our dear friend, and co-worker, Corinne Rosenfelder Rauch, so tragically taken from our midst, we have sustained a deep and everlasting loss. Because of our love for her, who has given her best at all times, because in her quiet but forceful way she has brought to us an appreciation of the excellence of her mental attainments and of the fineness and unaffected sweetness of her character we are now plunged into sincerest grief. May Almighty God in His Divine wisdom and infinite love and mercy, grant unto the stricken husband, mother, and family, the strength, with which to bear their great affliction."

¹⁷The sister of Corinne Rosenfelder Rauch.

¹⁸Herman Landau, *Adath Louisville: The Story of a Jewish Community* (Louisville: H. Landau and Associates: 1981), 33.

¹⁹In the Adath Israel board minutes from November 11, 1942, a resolution reads, "That the members do appoint Rabbi Dr. Joseph Rauch as Rabbi of Congregation Adath Israel for the remainder of his natural life, to perform the duties of the Rabbi so long as Divine Providence may bless him with the power so to do."

²⁰Lewis Cole. Interview by David Locketz, January 2004.

²¹Ibid.

forcefully, but with a gentle voice. He was very articulate and gave no indication of an accent.²² After living through two heart attacks, he died on February 19, 1957.

Upon ordination in 1905,²³ Rauch served as the rabbi of Mt. Sinai Temple in Sioux City, Iowa. It was in Sioux City that Rauch created the model of a rabbi that he would embody for the rest of his career. He moved far beyond the walls of his congregation, becoming an active voice in the community. Mainly, Rauch represented the Jewish community's interests, as he understood them²⁴ and as they intersected with the wider community, but he also embraced a broad responsibility to the citizens of Sioux City. His activities were politically and socially motivated, not simply synagogue based. He may have considered himself to be affiliated with the Progressive Movement.²⁵ For example, in 1910, the school board in Sioux City was not functioning at the level of what some community members expected. Rauch successfully led a campaign that forced the resignation of the school board president. Two of "his" men were elected to the board after the president resigned. Rauch became someone the community could count on for helping any individual in need, at a moment's notice. Rauch was once approached by a

²²Jim Hertzman. Interview by David Locketz, January 2004.

²³Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion Alumni directory. He is also listed as having studied education at the College.

²⁴Rauch often tried to lead his synagogue community into a political stance that it might not have automatically taken. Ultimately his goal was to teach his congregation the importance of communal participation while working toward positive change in the city. In a letter to a colleague found in his correspondence files held in the American Jewish Archives, Rauch makes reference to the school board story. Rauch wrote, "This is the first matter in which my whole congregation stood by me loyally. As a rule my members are either indifferent to my civic interests or regret that I am "mixed up" in them." He only faulted his congregation for not seeing things the same way as he did.

²⁵Members of the Progressive Movement were motivated by concern for people who had been less fortunate in providing for their own needs. Common attributes of rabbis who were considered Progressives were strong commitment to public schools, the Mission of Judaism, interest in scientific advances and the material world while acknowledging that religion had something to teach about both, and included strong sense of social justice. For more information on the Progressive Movement, See the Encyclopedia Britannica; and Marc Lee Raphael, "Training men and women in dignity, in civic righteousness, and in the responsibilities of American citizenship: The Thought of Rabbi Abram Simon, 1897-1938," *American Jewish Archives Journal*, (1997); and Michael E. McGerr, *A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement in America, 1870-1920* (New York: Free Press, 2003).

truant officer to intercede with a Catholic family that refused to send their child to school because the child's earnings were needed for food. When Rauch asked why he was being approached instead of the bishop, the officer told him that the matter needed immediate attention, and as such, he had come to bid the rabbi's assistance rather than the bishop's.²⁶

Through his political activities Rauch exhibited great interest in the morality of growth and behavior in the city in which he lived; especially if he observed a matter that was not handled as he would have hoped. He was quoted as saying, "No city has a moral right to grow commercially, industrially, and economically unless it sees to it that those less fortunate within it are given an opportunity to better themselves."²⁷ Rauch was a conservative thinker in regard to morality.²⁸ He held high expectations of each individual for their personal conduct in business, leadership roles, and in relationships. He also believed that government had a responsibility in to help citizens make proper choices. During his first years as rabbi in Sioux Falls, he favored the closing of all "saloons as evil places."²⁹ He clearly advocated government as a guiding light to moral living. He also felt that when youngsters perpetrated crimes, they should be punished harshly. He once suggested that delinquent teens be whipped.³⁰ Late in his career in Louisville, Rauch frequently participated as a panel member on a local radio station talk show entitled, "*The Moral Side of the News*."³¹ As such he was able to spread his moral message to the

²⁶Joseph Rauch Papers, Feb 21, 1910, box 9, folder 16.

²⁷*The Louisville Times*, 2-18-57.

²⁸He was considered a liberal both politically and socially by the standards of the times. By today's standards, he would be considered quite conservative.

²⁹Letter to the editor of the *Sioux City Journal*, Dec. 23, 1907.

³⁰*The Louisville Times*, 2/18/57, in reference to comments made on "The Moral Side of the News."

³¹This show aired weekly on WHAS radio in Louisville, Kentucky. There are no known recordings or manuscripts of these shows. At this time, there are still staff members at the radio station who remember working with Dr. Rauch.

greater community of Louisville. In this venue, Rauch also exposed the citizens of Louisville to Judaism and its beliefs through the understanding of its application to everyday living as advocated and preached by a rabbi.

Rauch was not looking for a new post, but in 1912, after a Louisville congregant heard him deliver a sermon in Chicago, he was offered a position at Adath Israel.³²

When Rauch came to Adath Israel it was a well-established synagogue with more than a half-century of history. While the Jewish community goes back to the establishment of

³²The board minutes relate the process of Rauch's hire in 1912. "From the beginning there was one name among the rest that always demanded consideration, namely that of Rabbi Joseph Rauch of Sioux City, Iowa, whom we are prepared to recommend...The fine impression made by Mr. Rauch upon other men whose opinions we sought had confirmed to us previous representations regarding him, of Dr. Joseph Stolz of Isaiah Temple, Chicago who has had occasion to observe Rabbi Rauch at his work...All preliminary investigation thus seemed to point inevitably to Rabbi Rauch. Therefore the Committee decided to hear him to see if these impressions would be confirmed. That this might be done without embarrassment either to Rabbi Rauch or his or this Congregation; we made a generous but secret arrangement with Dr. Joseph Stolz, who having planned to attend the Rabbinical Conference at Baltimore, invited Rabbi Rauch to occupy his pulpit on Saturday and Sunday the thirteenth and fourteenth of April, 1912...It happened that the Temple at Sioux City was temporarily under the charge of painters so that no services could be held. This enabled Rabbi Rauch to accept the invitation, without any knowledge that he would be heard with a view to the Louisville post...On both occasions, Rabbi Rauch's style and the manner and substance of his sermons, and his conduct of the services impressed the Committee without exception in the most favorable manner...Rabbi Rauch is thirty-one years of age. He was born in Austria and moved to Galveston, Texas, with his parents when he was about ten years of age. Inquiry concerning him and his family at Galveston recommends his family as 'honest industrious and intelligent people.' He is of pleasing appearance, of good voice, has good style of delivery, and on the occasions when we heard him at least free from any efforts of oratorical effects. His sermon was sound, wholesome, and well worked out. He impressed this committee as a man possessing much latent force. He has been at Sioux City since his graduation and has declined three opportunities to change, where the only advantage appealing to him was an increase in salary, which he did not regard alone as an inducement...We found Rabbi Rauch to be a man of independent views, broad minded, sympathetic and confident of his capacity to do the work in Louisville, though wholly without the slightest trace of boastfulness or self assertion...Matters of salary he declined to discuss, saying that in event a call should be extended to him he would rely upon the Congregation at Louisville seeing that he was paid a salary adequate to his needs here, and that his services would merit. Nor did he have any requirements respecting a contract, saying that he would not hold the position if he did not please the congregation. He did provide that, in the event of a call, he be permitted to have the opportunity to complete the work he was doing during the summer months at the University of Chicago, to obtain a Doctor's degree, exhibiting in this respect a commendable desire to keep up his studies and improve his scholarship...We believe that Rabbi Rauch possesses in himself qualities of scholarship and manhood of the best order; that he has the power of growth and development within him, which we feel in a short time surely will manifest themselves to all this Congregation and that before many years, if called, we will possess in Rabbi Rauch and his work, the same pride and satisfaction that we have so justifiably felt in his predecessors." Rauch accepted the call in a telegram dated, May 9, 1912.

Louisville as a village,³³ the congregation was first officially chartered in 1842.³⁴ Its history is typical of the synagogues established in the same time period. As the explorers in the United States continued to forge westward, so too did Jewish merchants, land dealers, bankers, and other significant professionals follow. Many German Jews found themselves in Louisville and thus, in the 1840s, the need for a congregation was apparent. The congregation was chartered as Adas Israel, which would remain its name until 1904 when it was officially changed to Adath Israel. Its charter was obtained through the help of Abraham Jonas (who had political ties to Abraham Lincoln). Jonas was the first Jewish citizen to be nominated, albeit unsuccessfully, to be speaker of the Kentucky House.³⁵

Thus when Rauch came to the congregation in 1912, it already had been in existence for more than 65 years. It was a well-established congregation of worshippers that cut across a wide range of citizens in Louisville. Throughout the history of Adath Israel, the congregation had experienced the entire spectrum of Jewish observance. The synagogue began as a daily minyan of the miners who were traveling west for the gold rush. Thus the congregation was founded with a slant toward traditional Judaism. As time went by and the synagogue evolved, Adath Israel became known as a stronghold of Classical Reform Judaism. The affiliation with Reform was cemented in history when the congregation sent its chazzan, B.H. Gotthelf,³⁶ to represent it at the conference

³³Louisville, Kentucky, was settled in 1779.

³⁴Herman Landau, *Adath Louisville: The Story of a Jewish Community* (Louisville: H. Landau and Associates: 1981), 20.

³⁵*Ibid*, Page 21.

³⁶Gotthelf, who is called rabbi in Encyclopaedia Judaica, also was noted as the second Jewish chaplain in the Union Army. See Encyclopaedia Judaica CD-ROM edition.

convened during 1855 in Cleveland.³⁷ Adath Israel's succession of rabbis testifies to its Reform pedigree. Many of the rabbis that served the congregation have been instrumental in the formation and the proliferation of the Reform movement of Judaism in America. During his early years in Cincinnati, Isaac Mayer Wise³⁸ preached in Louisville on more than one occasion. During one of his visits, he introduced his prayer book, *Minhag America*,³⁹ which became the accepted liturgy at Adath Israel. Wise was asked to become the fulltime preacher in the late 1850s, but he declined the offer. In 1866, Dr. Leopold Kleeberg⁴⁰ was engaged as the fulltime rabbi. He stayed in Louisville for eleven years before relinquishing the pulpit to his successor, Dr. Emil G. Hirsch.⁴¹ Hirsch remained in Louisville for three years. When he left the congregation in 1880, it already had grown a large membership of 253 families. Dr. Adolf S. Moses⁴² followed Hirsch and remained in that post until his death in 1902. While Moses' health was failing during the last years of the century, Adath Israel maintained close ties with HUC in

³⁷This conference was convened during October, 1855, in Cleveland, Ohio by I.M. Wise. His intent was to unite all American Jewish groups, both Orthodox and Reform. The conference, while not all who had agreed to attend did, ultimately issued a statement of shared belief in the Bible as being of Divine Origin, The Talmud as containing the "traditional, legal, and logical exposition of the biblical laws which must be expounded and practiced according to the comments of the Talmud," and a regular synod. It is, however, unlikely that these principles really reflected the practice in the pews of all the Reform congregations. See Michael Meyer, *Response to Modernity* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1995), 243-244.

³⁸Isaac Mayer Wise, born in Bohemia, worked to unify the Jewish people in America. He helped to found all the major institutions of Reform Judaism, including Hebrew Union College (The Reform rabbinical seminary), the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (The umbrella organization of Reform Jewish synagogues), and the Central Conference of American Rabbis (the union body of progressive rabbis in America). See Encyclopaedia Judaica CD-ROM edition.

³⁹The modernized prayer book, which Isaac Mayer Wise hoped would become the standard liturgy for American Jewry. See Michael Meyer, *Response to Modernity* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1995), 243-244.

⁴⁰Clive Kleeberg was born on July 14, 1832, in Hofgeismar, Germany, and died in Atlantic City, September 1, 1906. See *American Jewish Yearbook*, 1903-1904 & 1907-1908.

⁴¹Emil Gustav Hirsch was born in Luxembourg on May 22, 1851, and died in Chicago on January 7, 1923. He came to the United States in 1866. He worked briefly in Baltimore and in Louisville. After he left Louisville in 1880, he moved to Chicago to become the rabbi of Temple Sinai, where he remained. He graduated from the University of Pennsylvania and then studied at the Universities of Leipzig and Berlin. He studied for ordination at Hochschule fuer die Wissenschaft des Judentums in Berlin.

⁴²Adolph S. Moses was born in Kletchevo, Poland, in 1840 and died in Louisville on January 7, 1902. He studied at the Universities of Breslau and Vienna. He came to the United States in 1870. See *American Jewish Yearbook* 1902-1903.

Cincinnati, and the seminary supplied the congregation with student rabbis to help out with pulpit responsibilities. By 1901, Moses' health had deteriorated significantly, and the congregation was in need of a fulltime assistant.⁴³ Dr. Hyman G. Enelow⁴⁴ was engaged and, upon Moses' demise, Enelow assumed the congregation's pulpit. He remained in Louisville, Kentucky, until Rauch arrived in 1912.

Adath Israel was deeply steeped in the German Reform tradition. The German language was mandated for use in the worship services until it was removed from the constitution in 1868.⁴⁵ The history of the synagogue clearly reflects the growing pains of the Reform movement and the attendant issues that resulted from them.⁴⁶ For example, in 1891, a Sunday service was instituted as the primary service for the congregation.⁴⁷ While this created havoc for some members of the community, the service remained the primary worship service for Adath Israel until early 1932.⁴⁸

⁴³Herman Landau, *Adath Louisville: The Story of a Jewish Community* (Louisville: H. Landau and Associates: 1981), 20.

⁴⁴Hyman Gershom Enelow was born in Kovno, Lithuania on October 26, 1876 and died on February 5, 1934. He was ordained from the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati. He was a noted scholar and a rabbi.

⁴⁵Herman Landau, *Adath Louisville: The Story of a Jewish Community* (Louisville: H. Landau and Associates: 1981).

⁴⁶Official Reform Judaism in the United States was very new in the nineteenth Century. Many strong personalities disagreed as to the direction the Movement should take. Disputes over stated principles and chosen liturgies continued into the next century and to a certain extent, to this day. Congregations were pulled in different directions and lay leaders and their rabbis sought to make liberal Judaism a coherent choice that included egalitarianism, American culture, and autonomy while remaining true to its roots. See Michael Meyer, *Response to Modernity* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1995); and Michael Meyer and W. Gunther Plaut, editors. *The Reform Jewish Reader* (New York: UAHC Press, 2000); and W. Gunther Plaut, *The Growth of Reform Judaism* (New York: UAHC Press, 1965).

⁴⁷The institution of Sunday worship services was a point of contention in congregations across the Reform Jewish spectrum. The Central Conference of American Rabbis debated its merit for many years. Some congregants, and their rabbis, felt it was impossible to have the central worship service on the Jewish Sabbath because of the need to work that day. The debate included whether to consider Sunday the actual Sabbath, or to retain the traditional Sabbath with a weekday liturgy service held on Sunday morning when most could attend. See Michael Meyer, *Response to Modernity* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1995).

⁴⁸Adath Israel held its first Friday evening Sabbath Service after more than 40 years of Sunday morning services on March 4, 1932. Rauch delivered a sermon entitled, "Can We Recapture the Traditional Spirit of Sabbath."

From its earliest days, the edifice of Adath Israel became the centerpiece of Jewish life in Louisville. The first building was dedicated in 1849. It served both cultural and communal needs. In 1867, a fire destroyed that first building and the congregation had to rebuild on Sixth and Broadway. This new building remained Adath Israel's home until 1906. Having outgrown its quarters, a new edifice was erected on Third Street in 1906, which served the congregation until 1977.

Thus, when Rauch arrived, he encountered a temple with a rich history, a well-defined culture, and a newly erected structure located in the heart of the community. During his five decades as rabbi of the temple he did, however, add to its history with many great accomplishments. Under Rauch's leadership, the congregation became a modern Reform temple. As such, the temple grew to include much more than simply worship services and basic programs. The synagogue began to reach out to the community to provide for its members' religious growth and needs. Rauch initiated a number of programs during his tenure that helped establish this ideal. These included a monthly bulletin in 1912, a confirmation service in 1916 and a youth group. Under Rauch's leadership, the congregation also extended itself into the community. In 1945, in what was a significant first for Louisville, Adath Israel joined with the Fourth Avenue Methodist Church for a brotherhood service. The programmatic growth of the congregation under Rauch sought to bring together the various elements of life in Louisville, religious and secular, cultural and social.

By the early 1920s, Rauch had distinguished himself as a leader in the Reform movement and in the wider Jewish world, not simply in Louisville. As a rabbi who was certainly concerned with the larger Jewish community worldwide, he spent a significant

portion of his time working on projects, and for causes, associated with national and international bodies of progressive Judaism.⁴⁹ Rauch was a founding member of the World Union of Progressive Judaism (WUPJ).⁵⁰ He served on several committees in the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR),⁵¹ chairing the Committee on Revision of Weekday Services,⁵² the Committee on Church and State, the Nominating Committee, the Committee that compiled the first CCAR Manuel for Instruction to Proselytes,⁵³ and participated as the Vice Chairman of the Commission on Justice and Peace. Rauch also served as president of the Hebrew Union College Alumni Association and on its Board of Governors. Locally, he was no less involved. Rauch's work as a leader extended to the Jewish Welfare Federation,⁵⁴ with which he worked to organize the first Community Chest campaign, a charitable project working to help those in need. Rauch was involved with the Jewish Chautauqua Society⁵⁵ with whose help he worked to develop Jewish life

⁴⁹Progressive Judaism embodies most liberal, non-orthodox, forms of Jewish practice. While the theologies, traditions, and practices vary from group to group throughout the world, the umbrella term of Progressive Judaism essentially refers to a degree of personal autonomy and egalitarianism within a Jewish community.

⁵⁰The World Union for Progressive Judaism (WUPJ) was established in 1926 in London as a union of liberal Jewish institutions worldwide. Its mission is to support established progressive Jewish communities where found throughout the globe, and to provide resources for Jews seeking liberal minded Judaism where there is none. See Meyer, *Response to Modernity*; and WWW.WUPJ.ORG.

⁵¹The Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) is the rabbinic union of liberal rabbis in America. While rabbis in the Reform movement maintain autonomy in all areas of religious decision-making, the CCAR provides guidelines and resources for the rabbi to aid in such decision-making. It was founded in 1889 when I.M. Wise was elected its first president. See Michael Meyer, *Response to Modernity*, (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1995); and WWW.CCARNET.ORG; and *Encyclopaedia Judaica*.

⁵²This committee largely dealt with the question of Sunday morning services and its liturgy.

⁵³CCAR 1928

⁵⁴In 1918, the Federation of Jewish Charities became the Jewish Welfare Federation. This organization founded the Community Chest. It mainly offered help to new immigrants as they established themselves in Louisville. See Herman Landau, *Adath Louisville: The Story of a Jewish Community* (Louisville: H. Landau and Associates: 1981), 136.

⁵⁵The Jewish Chautauqua Society was established by Rabbi Henry Berkowitz in 1893. In mission, it was similar to the Christian Chautauqua Society. Its purview was adult education. It helped organize teachers such as Rabbi Rauch to meet with and educate Jewish college students in issues relevant to Judaism.

on university campuses. He also served on the board of the Young Men's Hebrew Association (YMHA).⁵⁶

While Rauch was the rabbi in Sioux City, he faced challenges common to a small town. Louisville, as a larger town, had its own challenges. But Rauch quickly became a community spokesman there, as well, for causes both Jewish and otherwise. His list of activities was enormous. Rauch served as president of the Louisville Public Library System for 17 years. He was active on the boards of the Federation of Social Agencies in Louisville and the University of Kentucky in Louisville. He was the chairman of the Louisville chapter of the Red Cross for four years and was a member of the board starting in 1924. He joined the Rotary club in 1917 and once served on its international governing body. He was a 32nd degree Mason and a life member of the Elks. He served as the first vice president of the Blue Cross Hospital Plan. He was the co-chairman of the Citizen's Committee for the Six-Year School building program for the public school system. The sheriff also deputized him so he could have easy access to delinquent minors who needed his help. In 1952, Rauch was named the "Louisville Man of the Week." This seemingly endless list of communal participation and leadership emphasizes the extent to which Rauch worked to align the Jewish community with the non-Jewish community in order to break down barriers between the two.

Rauch's interfaith work brought together the entire religious spectrum in Louisville. He worked hard to achieve a level of respect and understanding between religious communities. Rauch had strong relationships with other clergy in town with

⁵⁶The Young Men's Hebrew Association (YMHA) was a precursor to the more recent Jewish Community Center. The first one was established in 1854 in Baltimore. It sought to serve the cultural and social needs of young Jewish men. The YMHA was established in Louisville in approximately 1890. During Rauch's time in Louisville, the YMHA was located at 2nd and Jacobs streets. It was located there from 1915-1955.

which he modeled understanding, brotherhood and fellowship to his congregants. He seemed to understand that, by working together, the Jewish and Christian communities could accomplish a great deal. As such, Rauch was a leader in the National Conference for Christians and Jews.⁵⁷ Rauch often preached in venues outside of his temple. His work with other clergy and religious institutions often led to invitations to speak from other pulpits. Often his message resonated with non-Jews. Reverend Robert T. Wilson said of him, "We at the First Unitarian Church (in Louisville) looked upon him as our honorary minister."⁵⁸ Rauch was once offered a job at the Fields Episcopal Church, but declined saying, "I told them there were some major theological obstacles in the way of my taking the post."⁵⁹

Rauch's work brought him into the political arena on several occasions. He understood that government action and policy affected all citizens and that the Jewish community must be active participants in government. After World War I, Herbert Hoover asked Rauch to travel to Eastern Europe to survey its condition. Later, in 1947 while Harry Truman was in office, Rauch stood witness before the Joint Congressional Armed Services Committee when it considered Universal Military Training.⁶⁰ In 1949, Rauch contributed a report on religion to the Mid-century White House Conference on

⁵⁷The mission of the National Conference for Community and Justice (the renamed National Conference of Christians and Jews) states, "The National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ), founded in 1927 as The National Conference for Christians and Jews, is a human relations organization dedicated to fighting bias, bigotry and racism. NCCJ promotes understanding and respect among all races, religions and cultures through advocacy, conflict resolution and education. The mission encompasses all people. The organization finds all forms of oppression, prejudice and discrimination to be wrong. Always. No form of discrimination is acceptable. Therefore, the mission includes any type of racism, sexism, homophobia, classism, xenophobia, and discrimination based on physical and mental disabilities." See WWW.NCCJ.ORG.

⁵⁸*Louisville Times* 2-19-57.

⁵⁹*Louisville Times* 2-19-57.

⁶⁰*Ibid.* The Universal Military Training was a program that President Harry Truman commissioned for study. The commission determined that all young Americans should have mandatory military training, but Congress disagreed.

Children and Youth.⁶¹ In preparing for this report, Rauch was responsible for understanding and explaining how the major religions practicing in the United States attempted to educate their young people. Rauch also served on the principle executive committee of the Southern Council on International Relations.⁶² Through this council, which was funded by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Rauch collaborated with other scholars and religious leaders, to create a vision for a peaceful role for the United States in the world community.

As a scholar, Rauch also accomplished a great deal. He wrote two books, several articles, and hundreds of sermons and public addresses that have been preserved. Rauch was prolific in his sermon writing. He wrote sermons on every topic imaginable. He knew how to get his message across and used his mastery of the Bible and Jewish sources to bring this message to his congregation. Underlying it all, Rauch's message was simple and clear: Judaism has something to say about the way you live your life, and Judaism requires of its followers a moral life exemplified through its responsibility to the people of the country in which one lives. Rauch wrote much about Jewish religious observance and tradition. He also wrote extensively about the Reform Liturgy for worship services.

⁶¹Rauch wrote six pages of lengthy comprehensive analysis of the situation regarding youth education for this conference. Rauch was responsible for researching and explaining the process by which Protestants, Catholics, and Jews each educated their young people. His six pages contain his summary.

⁶²The Abstract from the archives of the University of North Carolina, where the archives for the Southern Council of International Relations are housed reads, "The Southern Council on International Relations (SCIR) was established in 1937 as a nonpartisan, nonprofit, civic association by a group of civic, religious, and educational leaders representing the ten southeastern states. The purpose of the Council was to counter the growth of isolationism in the South and the nation by promoting international understanding through public education. The Council supported the United Nations, the International Trade Organization, the international exchange of students and teachers, the Good Neighbor Policy, the strengthening of ties between the people of the United States and Latin America, and other international institutions and programs promoting cooperation among nations in the interest of peace, prosperity, and mutual understanding." The central office of the Council was located at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill.

Rauch was responsible for the entries on Louisville and Kentucky in The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia.⁶³

At the turn of the nineteenth century, the Jewish population and culture were on the rise in the United States. During the 1890s, American Jewish literature flourished. Jewish periodicals of all types had proliferated since the 1850s. Jewish theaters were established in many places and Yiddish theater remained successful into the 1940s.⁶⁴ Reform Judaism was also on the rise. All of the movement's major institutions had been created in the previous 25 years and the organization of the Reform movement was solidified in them. The Hebrew Union College was rocked with change during Rauch's tenure as a student. The founder, and president, Isaac Mayer Wise, died in 1900. As a result, Rauch's student career was touched by three different presidents; Wise, Moses Mielziner,⁶⁵ who temporarily replaced Wise, and Kaufman Kohler,⁶⁶ who assumed the presidency just after Rauch was ordained.⁶⁷ Indeed the Jewish community, into which Rauch was ordained, at least on a national and institutional level, while strong and growing, was set for change. One can imagine, that as Rauch received his ordination

⁶³*The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia: An Authoritative and Popular Presentation of Jews and Judaism since the Earliest of Times.* (New York: The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia, Inc., 1939-1943.) 10 Volumes.

⁶⁴Rufus Lears, *The Jews in America: A History* (Cleveland: World Publishing Co. 1954), 196.

⁶⁵Moses Mielziner was born in 1828. He studied under Samuel Holdheim in Germany and received his rabbinic ordination from the Hungarian rabbi, Leopold Loew. He also received a Ph.D. from the University of Giessen. In the United States, Mielziner served as a rabbi and teacher in New York before joining the faculty of HUC in Cincinnati as the professor of Talmud. He was widely accepted as the most prominent scholar on the faculty. Following Wise's death in 1900, Mielziner served as Interim President of HUC until his own death in February 18, 1903.

⁶⁶Kaufman Kohler was born in Furth, Bavaria, on May 10, 1843. He was raised in the strictest of Orthodox homes. As a University student, he was influenced by Samson Raphael Hirsch and entered into the world of Religious progressivism. Kohler was an author and contributed to the creation of the Jewish Encyclopedia. He also served as editor for the JPS Bible project from 1908-1915. Kohler was rabbi of Beth El in Detroit from 1869-1871, Chicano Sinai Congregation from 1871-1879, and Temple Beth El in New York until he assumed the presidency of the Hebrew Union College in 1903, where he remained until he retired in 1921. He died on January 28, 1926.

⁶⁷See Samuel Karf, ed. *Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion: At 100 Year* (Cincinnati: Huc Press, 1976); and Michael Meyer, *Response to Modernity* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1995).

certificate, the magnitude of Jewish development and change influenced him heavily as he began his career. The contradistinctions between the condition of American Jewry and World Jewry were great. These differences certainly played a major role in Rauch's work. He was driven to strengthen the established American Jewish community while working to bridge it with the world Jewish community. Rauch crossed the ocean more than 50 times in pursuit of this bridge.

It is said of Rabbi Joseph Rauch that he "sought to link the Jewish community with the general life of Louisville." Reviewing the life of this rabbi, one might suggest that he further sought to use this link to bring the Mission of Israel to the world, while anchoring the position of Jewish Americans in society. His rabbinate intersected with life across spectrums, religious and secular, public and private, local, national, and international. Rauch's public role brought the nature of rabbis to the general population and thus a light was shed on Judaism as a significant religion in the American culture of the central southern state of Kentucky.

Joseph Rauch embodied a different model of what a rabbi can be for American Jews. First and foremost, Rauch was a congregational rabbi. But he was also a public figure and spokesman, a scholar, and an international Jewish leader. The coming chapters explore Rauch's career in greater depth in an attempt to understand better his contributions and legacy.

Chapter 2

The purpose of this chapter is to survey and illustrate Joseph Rauch's vision of the pulpit rabbinate. Later chapters deal with Rauch's activities outside the synagogue. There is a wealth of material that aids in this endeavor. The most valuable of these sources is the collection of minutes from the Adath Israel⁶⁸ Board of Trustees monthly meetings, those from special meetings, and from annual meetings.⁶⁹ It was to the board that Rauch most explicitly articulated his ideas regarding a variety of programmatic and didactic issues concerning the temple. In 1912, at the onset of his rabbinate in Louisville, Rauch only occasionally offered his comments in written form. Most often these communiqués were reflections after board meetings, or just before significant events in the temple calendar. Beginning in the middle of the 1930s, his comments to the board began to take the form of an occasional written letter. By the end of the 1940s these letters were monthly, multi-bulleted lists of detailed instructions to the board. Rauch distributed these directives prior to each meeting of the governing body.

A second source of information that is instructive as to Rauch's concept of the congregational rabbinate can be found in the monthly bulletins produced by the temple (Adath Israel). Rauch was instrumental in the creation of the monthly bulletin and, as such, it often reads like a menu of Rauch's congregational concerns. The bulletin first appeared in 1913, just after Rauch's tenure as rabbi at Adath Israel began. Where

⁶⁸Notes and other relevant material from Mt. Sinai Temple in Sioux City, Iowa, which Rauch served, are not extant. The American Jewish Archives collection contains material from 1919 forward.

⁶⁹The originals contained in ledger books are held in the Frances Shapiro – Weitzenhoffer Archives room on the campus of Temple in Louisville, KY. Copies of these (paper until 1947, and microfilm from 1947) can be found in the American Jewish Archives on the Cincinnati campus of the Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion, in the Adath Israel collection.

possible, the information found in these bulletins can be corroborated to highlight the actual implementation of Rauch's congregational program.⁷⁰

The third source of useful information for reconstructing Rauch's philosophical and programmatic approach to the pulpit rabbinate is an annual brochure detailing the educational accomplishments of the temple's religious school. This pamphlet was published at the conclusion of each school year. Each of these brochures includes a note of introduction from Rauch.⁷¹

Finally, a fourth source of information concerning Joseph Rauch's pulpit rabbinate is embedded in the annual reports to the congregation by the Board of Trustees. Through these descriptions in the notes, beginning with his tenure at Adath Israel and continuing until the annual report of 1936, it is possible to reconstruct the congregation's vision of their rabbi and his efforts.

This chapter focuses on five specific areas that characterize Rauch's 52 years in the rabbinate. The first is the characterization of his rabbinate as described by his congregation vis-à-vis the annual statements of the temple president. The others are worship, education, temple programming, and the aspects of community involvement he encouraged through his role as rabbi.

⁷⁰The writer is limited in using the bulletin material because there is no specific attribution to Rauch in terms of bulletin authorship. It appears to the writer that Rauch was, in fact, the author of the Adath Israel bulletin because of the language, writing style, and frequent statements in the first person. Rauch did not write a specific rabbis column, as is frequently the case in such temple bulletins. Certain indications that he did author the bulletin exist. For example, in a November 13, 1951, letter to the Board of Trustees, Rauch made reference to what he had written in the bulletin that month. Attached to this letter, he included a clipping of the reference. The clipping is the same as the rest of the bulletin material in that it has no specific attribution. From time to time, we know that Rauch did write letters or memos in the bulletin directed at specific groups in the membership of the synagogue. These letters were always signed, "Rabbi," and as such may be included in this chapter as a primary source of information.

⁷¹Rauch makes references to these brochures throughout the congregational board notes, but extant are only those brochures from 1913 through 1925. Rauch's introductory statements allow generalizations to be made regarding the education component of the temple program. Rauch made frequent mention of religious school activities in his communiqués to the board. As such, these brochures provide but a small, secondary source of information.

It is possible to conceptualize Rauch's career in terms of two distinct periods.⁷² The first period begins in 1912 with his election as rabbi of Adath Israel, and it ends in 1936.⁷³ The second period of his career extends from 1937 until his death in 1957. Generally speaking, it appears as though Rauch administered his vision from behind the scenes during that first period. It may have been that during those first twenty-five years, the leadership was determined to maintain the status quo and Rauch acquiesced. Logically, in the second period Rauch transitioned into the position of elder (or at least older) statesman rabbi. By 1936, many of the board members, and active congregants, were people who had grown up in the congregation with Rauch as their rabbi. This change in dynamic allowed for Rauch to assert himself in a very different way regarding his vision. The congregational records offer us no idea as to the degree Rauch influenced the actions of the president and Board of Trustees. It was in that first period that the president of the congregation reported the activities and endeavors that comprised Rauch's schedule at the temple's annual meeting. These statements were generally congratulatory in nature and indicated the organizational pride held by the institution for all the accomplishments achieved by their Rabbi. The initial annual statements contained continued appeals of welcome.

Beginning in 1915, when Rauch became more established in the community, these statements largely promoted the deeds of the rabbi. In the statement from 1915, the president stated that Rauch had given "earnestly of his talents and labors to the work of the pulpit," which included all the programs in his charge, the administration of the

⁷²Because the extant sources come primarily from Rauch's tenure with Adath Israel, the writer's division of Rauch's pulpit rabbinate begins with 1912, his first year at Adath Israel.

⁷³The annual report of 1936 represents the last formal statement by any president of the congregation that appeared annually. From that point forth, official recognition took the form of announcements when Rauch received an award or accomplished something exemplary.

religious school, and the character of the worship services. The statement proudly asserted that Rauch had already achieved a "place in the hearts of our people" because of his "learning, his sympathy, his devotion and his modesty."⁷⁴

In 1936, the second period of Rauch's rabbinate in Louisville began. It was in that year that the "Annual Report" stopped including presidential statements about Rauch's progress. In his statements, Rauch communicated details about his activity to the board in writing. It would be another decade before these letters became standard operating procedure for Rauch. By this time, Rauch was no longer a young rabbi. He had reached full maturity in the congregation, and it followed that he no longer needed a congregational president to vouch for his accomplishments. Whether this transition was a formal decision or a natural evolution, it is not known. The nature of the letters Rauch wrote is, in itself, instructive. He wrote to remind the board of its responsibilities and to make his own priorities known within the context of the temple program. These letters manifest the parental relationship that Rauch cultivated toward the board as he grew older. He knew what it was that he wanted to achieve, and he knew how to motivate the board to help him to achieve these objectives.

It is clear that Rauch was held in a high regard by the leadership of Adath Israel because of the many roles he played in the lives of his congregants. The lengthy lexicon of positive attributions used to describe Rauch's character and his work ethic is extraordinary. He worked hard for the congregation, often beginning his workday at 5 a.m.⁷⁵ Though it seems he asked for a salary raise only once in his career, he was continually rewarded with salary increases. At the end of Rauch's first two years in

⁷⁴Annual Report, 1915.

⁷⁵This was first noted in Chapter 1. It was also said of him, "the hour never grows too late nor the day too long for him to minister when called in distress." Congregational minutes, October 31, 1936.

Louisville, Mr. Benjamin S. Washer put forth a resolution calling for Rauch to be reelected to his post for a term "agreeable to him" in length. The president confirmed this resolution in January 1916.⁷⁶ If financial remuneration is any indication of the esteem in which the congregation held Rauch, he was greatly admired. Twice during his tenure, Rauch was presented with a new automobile.⁷⁷ Rauch's salary was regularly increased. In 1912, his initial contract was for an annual payment of \$3600.00. In 1950, he was contracted for \$12000.00.⁷⁸ Only during the Depression years did his salary decrease. Rauch was so closely tied to the Jewish identity of the congregation that at the temple's centennial celebration in October 1943, he was presented with a resolution naming him "Rabbi for Life."⁷⁹ His name was synonymous with that of the temple. Even though he pleaded for a simple plaque,⁸⁰ when the new education building was completed in 1952, the congregation dedicated⁸¹ the "Joseph Rauch Chapel."⁸²

The leadership of Adath Israel was quite cognizant of the pastoral role their rabbi assumed during an era when it was not expected of a scholar rabbi. He was frequently cited as spending a great deal of time visiting with the sick and giving comfort to those

⁷⁶Congregational minutes of the Annual Meeting of 1915.

⁷⁷On October 27, 1927, in honor of his fifteenth year with the temple, an anonymous donor awarded him a new car. In 1947, during Rauch's 35th year in Louisville, he was again awarded a new car.

⁷⁸After 1950, the congregational record does not indicate separate salaries for Drs. Rauch and Herbert Waller. It can only be surmised that he continued to receive increases until his death. The amount of \$12,000 in 1950 appears to have been a generous salary. There is not much information about rabbis' salaries in the twentieth century, but a few indicators demonstrate that Rauch was well paid. In an emerging study, it appears that \$2600 was the top salary of any rabbi in the movement in 1939. See unpublished study by Devhra Bennet Jones of the American Jewish Archives entitled, "1st Year Salary Survey." At the other end of the spectrum, Dr. Emil G. Hirsch, who preceded Rauch in Louisville by 32 years, was earning \$12,000 in 1898 at Temple Sinai in Chicago. Hirsch's inflated wage may be attributed to his national stature in American Jewish life, not to be understood in the normal range of remuneration. See Chicago Sinai Congregation Board minutes, April 25, 1898, pages 61-65 in the American Jewish Archives.

⁷⁹Congregational minutes, October 1943.

⁸⁰Rauch insisted that rather than name the building after him, which is what the leadership desired, that they install a plaque stating that his hopes and dreams had been fulfilled in the erection of the new edifice to house the religious school.

⁸¹Congregational minutes, November 20, 1953.

⁸²In a letter to the board for naming the chapel after him, Rauch stated, "Not many rabbis have the joy to see and hear such an outpouring of affection, devotion and respect." December 8, 1953.

members in distress.⁸³ Young and old alike viewed him lovingly. The annual report of 1921 mentioned that he ably looked "after the welfare of the large membership...He is always ready to respond, whether it be in joy or sorrow; his services, advice, and friendship is sought by many."⁸⁴ Rauch took a special interest in remaining in touch with the entire membership, longtime members and new ones, in the congregation. He was also popular with the children in the religious school. One report mentions "one of his noblest attributes is his love for the children of our Sabbath School which is so gloriously reflected by the adoration and respect of our children for him."⁸⁵ Rauch himself mentioned in one bulletin article that he viewed the confirmands as his own "boys and girls."⁸⁶ The congregation also praised him for the pastoral role he played in the community beyond Adath Israel. In 1936 he was noted for finding time to "minister frequently to those who by reason of selfish design or impoverished purse are not listed" on the roster of the temple.⁸⁷

Pastoral work was a major part of Rauch's vision whether in his congregation or not. In 1918 Rauch heard that there was a significant need for Jewish chaplains in the army and he immediately applied for a commission as chaplain. He did not want to put the congregation at bay while he was overseas so he tendered his resignation. However, the board refused to accept his resignation and recommended that the congregation

⁸³Isidore Hirsch, president during 1924, wrote of him, "One may paraphrase the quotation, 'None know him but to love him; none name him but to praise.'" This is mentioned in the annual meeting notes of 1924.

⁸⁴Congregational minutes, October 1, 1921.

⁸⁵Congregational minutes, October 1923.

⁸⁶Adath Israel monthly bulletin, November 1915.

⁸⁷Congregational minutes, October 21, 1936.

provide Rauch with an indefinite leave of absence. Ultimately, Rauch did not receive a commission.⁸⁸

Worship was one area in which Rauch spent much time and energy. The issues concerning worship at Adath Israel occupied as much space as education in the pages of the bulletin and in the letters Rauch wrote to the Board of Trustees. Clearly it held a foremost place in his agenda. Looking back over his 44 years of service to Adath Israel, congregational worship was an area of both great joy and deep frustration for Rauch. The style of worship at Adath Israel was decidedly Classical Reform. This meant that the service was somewhat formal. There was an active ritual committee whose role, working in concert with Rauch, was to make services an edifying experience for each congregant. This committee, which reported directly to the Board of Trustees, helped the congregation navigate the turbulent waters of evolving Reform Jewish ritual practice over the course of Rauch's career. While he may have advised this committee, Rauch was primarily concerned with the number in attendance. He was eager to adjust services in a manner that would make them more appealing to the congregation so there would be a full house during worship times.

It is interesting to note that that this Reform synagogue offered its congregants a daily *Yarzeit* service. But the day on which the congregation held its primary weekly service changed over the years. As stated in chapter one, in 1891 Adath Israel instituted a Sunday service as the congregation's primary weekly worship service. While many Reform congregations had abandoned the Sunday service by 1920,⁸⁹ Sunday worship at

⁸⁸Board minutes, November 21, 1918

⁸⁹See Kerry Olitzky, *Sunday Sabbath Controversy in Judaism* (HUC Rabbinic Thesis, pages 94 and 108). "By 1920, The Sunday-Sabbath movement was evidently dead." By 1931, when Adath Israel

Adath Israel was not called into question until much later. On December 1, 1931, a special congregational meeting was convened in order to discuss moving the weekly worship service to Friday night. There was a great split in the membership. A lively debate ensued when two reports, one representing the majority opinion and one presenting the minority view on the matter, were presented. The majority report challenged the congregation to maintain Sunday morning worship, while the minority report sought to move it to Friday night. Interestingly, both sides indicated that Rauch was in support of their stance. And this may have been the case. Rauch appears to have been somewhat conflicted on this matter. Rauch sat on the CCAR committee that studied this issue. He made it clear to the congregation that, while their main weekly worship service was held on Sunday morning, this was not, in fact, a Shabbat service or specifically religious in nature. Sunday morning worship was a combination of a short service with a substantial sermon delivered by Rauch. In the notes of the minority report, it states that Rauch, because Sunday morning was indeed not the Sabbath, felt that Friday night would be more attractive to the Jewish people because it was the "real"⁹⁰ time for a Sabbath Worship service. That said, Rauch also indicated that he preferred maintaining Sunday morning worship if the congregation would start attending in larger numbers. After a series of inconclusive votes, Rauch announced that he wished to support the will of the people, which seemed to call for the adoption of Friday night worship. On January 5, 1932, a letter was sent to the congregation announcing the change.⁹¹

returned to Friday night services, there were only seven Reform Congregations reportedly still holding Sunday morning services.

⁹⁰This is attributed to Rauch in the Minority Report.

⁹¹Congregational minutes, 12-1-1931.

The specific style of the worship services conducted by Rauch is not recorded. Yet insight into its nature exists in the congregational record and in the memory of those who attended services that Rauch led. Rauch is remembered as being very "dignified" on the pulpit.⁹² There was very little Hebrew included in the service. There was also a paid, non-Jewish choir.⁹³ A large organ was maintained in the main sanctuary. It was repaired, at the request of Rauch, on several different occasions in order to maintain its central role in the congregation. That very role appears to have remained strong throughout the first six decades of the nineteenth century. In 1952, after the Rauch Chapel was dedicated in the new education building, a family in the congregation donated funds to install a second organ into that space. In an ongoing fashion, the Worship Committee studied different aspects of the worship service in order to keep it relevant and edifying. Beginning in 1951, the committee began to take a more active role in addressing attendance issues surrounding Friday night worship. Rauch attempted to increase service attendance by making emotional appeals to the membership, both during services and in bulletins. The committee, for its part, approached this through alterations to the worship service itself. In 1951, the worship committee submitted a report to the Board of Trustees that suggested adding a Sabbath candle lighting ceremony to the service. They also requested that more traditional Jewish music be added to the service. These suggestions seem to be an attempt to move the congregation toward an observance of home rituals during the worship service. These additions to the ritual were coupled

⁹²Sylvia Waller. Interview by David Locketz, January 23, 2004.

⁹³Marcia Hertzman. Interview by David Locketz, January 2004.

with requests for the clergy to don robes⁹⁴ and for congregational announcements to be typed up and distributed, not read. Additionally they requested that the back rows of pews should be roped off to force the congregation to the front of the sanctuary in an attempt to create more intimacy.⁹⁵ Two years later, Rauch reported that attempts were being made to make the services more "friendly and full of fellowship."⁹⁶

The aspect of worship, which Rauch addressed most frequently and aggressively, was congregational attendance. Attendance was a concern for Rauch with every temple program. Right in the first bulletin in 1913 an announcement of a Sisterhood sponsored lecture series included a strongly worded request that the "membership support" the program.⁹⁷ That request was the first of many. As Rauch indicated in these requests for participation, he did not want the temple to embarrass itself in the face of the city's scholars who were invited to speak to the congregation, and the Christians who had a better attendance record in their churches. He wanted to show the city that the Jewish people were serious, studious, and cultured. Regarding attendance at worship services, Rauch truly believed that his congregation needed the spiritual support and connection only found through worship.⁹⁸ Frequently representatives of the Board of Trustees would make pleas to the membership. The congregational record shows repeated calls for higher attendance citing that the best way to show appreciation to Rauch was to attend services.⁹⁹ At the 1934 annual meeting, the president made a statement that he was concerned with declining attendance. He claimed that never before in the history of the

⁹⁴Rauch is remembered to have worn a dark morning Suit during services long after they had fallen from fashion. According to Sylvia Waller (see note 125), Dr. Waller was able to convince Rauch to substitute a dark robe for his morning suit. Sylvia Waller. Interview by David Locketz, January 23, 2004.

⁹⁵Congregational notes; taken from a letter to the Board from Rauch on 3-23-51.

⁹⁶Congregational notes; taken from a letter to the Board from Rauch on 4-14-53.

⁹⁷Temple Bulletin, November 1913.

⁹⁸See chapter 4 for a discussion of this.

⁹⁹Board minutes, 10-30-1930.

congregation had attendance been worse.¹⁰⁰ Rauch was more extreme in his approach to the attendance issue. He spoke directly and honestly in the board minutes and in the bulletin about it. He once compared one's obligation to the temple to an individual's obligation to pay taxes to the state. He claimed that if one could pay 1 percent income tax to the state, then surely they could spend 1 percent of their time active at temple and in worship.¹⁰¹ His use of the public medium by way of the bulletin was quite direct. In one issue he accused some members of being "atmospheric Jews." By this he meant Jews who would only come to temple if the weather were perfect. He wondered in the pages of the bulletin why it was that members would trek to the theaters or to social events in the most inclement weather, but would avoid leaving home for temple when there was "a little cloud on the horizon."¹⁰² He described other members as having "established a purely financial relationship between themselves and the Almighty. They send Him quarterly checks to the Temple."¹⁰³ Even more directly, Rauch wrote letters to specific groups via the bulletin. In a 1915 letter addressed, "Dear Mr. Business Man," Rauch pleaded with these men to attend to their "investment" in the temple as closely as they do in their businesses. He wrote that he was personally disappointed when they did not come to services and that the "social kindnesses" they exhibited to him could not possibly equal their actual presence in the building. He added that, "You are a business man and understand the meaning of the phrase, 'business before pleasure.' The Temple is my chief business."¹⁰⁴ A subsequent letter was written addressed to "The Young Ladies of Adath Israel" in which he gave a gentle reminder that they had forgotten about

¹⁰⁰Board minutes, annual meeting 1934.

¹⁰¹Temple Bulletin, December 1913.

¹⁰²Temple Bulletin, January 1914.

¹⁰³Temple Bulletin, February 1914.

¹⁰⁴Temple Bulletin, February 1915.

the temple. He suggested that they form a "Temple Going Club."¹⁰⁵ Another similar letter was addressed to the confirmands. Rauch's passion for a full house during congregational worship is very clear through these messages.

Throughout the bulletins and in the temple minutes, Rauch continued to express his disappointment over poor attendance at worship services. In the 1940s he began to take formal action. In a 1947 letter to the Board of Trustees, Rauch referred to the issue as a "matter of paramount importance" stating that it went back further than even the oldest member of the temple could possibly remember. He recognized that it was not an issue to be solved overnight, but that something needed to be done. He urged the board to pass a resolution stating that the temple strongly urges the "members not to give dinners or other social functions on Friday evenings." The board did pass such a resolution urging that everyone make Friday night temple night.¹⁰⁶ Rauch's highest aspiration was for temple to become the absolute center of congregants' lives. In one bulletin article he pleaded with regular temple goers not to leave so quickly after the Kaddish. He wrote asking that they "make all haste before they come to Temple, but not after they are there."¹⁰⁷

Rauch believed that Judaism could benefit the lives of all who sat for a moment paying attention. It was through worship experiences that Rauch sought to bring the message of Judaism to the congregation. In 1952, WHAS TV asked to televise Rosh Hashanah Services. Rauch loved the idea, telling the board that the opportunity was a tribute to the temple and a great way to "bring the message of Rosh Hashanah to

¹⁰⁵Temple Bulletin, April 1915.

¹⁰⁶Board minutes, letter to the Board of Trustees, December 8, 1947.

¹⁰⁷Temple Bulletin, December 1914.

everyone.”¹⁰⁸ Rauch expressed his philosophy of religion directly: “The true outcome of religion is an irresistible impulse to perfect living, or as near perfect living as we humans can attain.”¹⁰⁹ This prophetic view of religion was a major force in all that Rauch tried to accomplish in the synagogue.

Education, and the religious school, was an area in which Rauch spent most of his time. Because several editions of the brochure detailing the accomplishments of the religious school are extant, we can clearly see what was important to Rauch and we can piece together his philosophy of education. Although it was never explicitly stated, Rauch advocated an approach to learning, which today is called life-long education. The temple program was full of educational opportunities for adults and Rauch constantly urged the membership to participate. His direct involvement in the administration of the religious school and its curriculum attest to the primary position it held in his agenda. The role he assumed in the religious school was central to its success. He established the school as one of his top priorities from his earliest days at Adath Israel. He did so because he truly believed the future of Judaism depended on it. He once stated in the bulletin that, “The Congregation of the future depends on the religious school of the present.”¹¹⁰

It is clear that Rauch personally headed the school. He had administrative support, but he personally directed the teachers. He interviewed and engaged the staff and when they left the program, they tendered their resignations to him directly.¹¹¹ He was also intimately involved with the school’s curriculum. He once suggested that

¹⁰⁸Board minutes, September 9, 1952. The service that was filmed was at 3pm on September 20, 1952.

¹⁰⁹Easter Essay.

¹¹⁰Temple Bulletin, November 1913.

¹¹¹In the temple board notes containing a letter from Rauch to the board dated September 14, 1948, he commented on how he personally appointed, directed, and replaced the teachers when necessary.

successful teaching in the religious school had less to do with the training of the teachers who were all college graduates and professional teachers, and more to do with their "desire to teach their subjects."¹¹² But, Rauch also understood the importance of proper teacher training. As important as love for the topic was, some sort of formal understanding of how to teach things Jewish was essential. In 1920, the congregation formally affiliated with the Jewish Chautauqua Society and began sending two teachers a year for specialized training.¹¹³ It is clear that Rauch wanted to establish a personal bond with the children in the congregation, not just with their parents. And he was quite concerned with their ability to learn in the program. As is highlighted later, Rauch was intimately aware of the distractions to learning that were caused by the inadequate facility.

Rauch's philosophy of education was clearly based on teaching the students the ethics and morals as presented by the Prophets in the Bible. In all that was accomplished via the religious school, the "Prophetic and historical ideals were held up for example and inspiration."¹¹⁴ That Judaism has something to say about how people should live their lives was central to the way in which Rauch perceived the educational goals of the religious school. "The real purpose of our Religious School has been to attach our young people by bonds that shall endure throughout life, to cultivate seeds of devotion, to lay the foundation for faith, and to awaken the mind to a consciousness of life's spiritual ideals."¹¹⁵ In creating such an educational program for these objectives, Rauch expected children from a very young age to memorize Bible passages as well as various prayers

¹¹²Brochure of Education, 1913-1914.

¹¹³Brochure of Education, 1920-1921.

¹¹⁴Brochure of Education, 1917-1918.

¹¹⁵Brochure of Education, 1923-1924.

from the worship service. He strongly believed that a "systematic"¹¹⁶ understanding of Judaism, or rote knowledge of Jewish information, would lead to a strong loyalty to Judaism. Rauch also believed that teaching by example was by far the most effective pedagogy. He wrote, "We believe in teaching by example as well as by precept and the weekly donations brought home the lesson of charity concretely to each of the children."¹¹⁷

Rauch was not tied to the cultural traditions of the temple in terms of the religious school. He pioneered new ideas and gave up old ones when their day was done. In 1919, after twelve years of a Shabbat afternoon religious school option, he gave up the program because it no longer accomplished what had been intended.¹¹⁸ Rauch appears to have enjoyed trying new things. He was consistently proud of steps the school made in the area of technology. He believed that technology could help teachers to convey their lessons to their students, but he also understood that it was not the most important thing.¹¹⁹ Rauch changed his stance on Bar Mitzvah training because it allowed for him to closely and personally instruct these boys in their religious understanding.¹²⁰ The pioneering of B'nai Mitzvah¹²¹ at Adath Israel was a return to an old Jewish custom. Having been against many celebrating their Jewish coming of age, he came full circle and

¹¹⁶Brochure of Education, 1913-1914.

¹¹⁷Brochure of Education, 1916-1917.

¹¹⁸Adath Israel had originally designed its Sabbath afternoon religious school program specifically for immigrant children. With WWI, immigration had slowed and thus the school no longer was serving the population for which it had been created. Rauch explains this in the Brochure of Education, 1918-1919.

¹¹⁹He wrote on June 10, 1923, "In the final analysis, it is the spirit and not the furnishings of the school that make the difference."

¹²⁰The practice of boys becoming Bar Mitzvah, or becoming responsible for themselves as Jewish adults, at age 13 as traditionally practiced was not common in American Reform Judaism until sometime between 1930 and 1960 when most congregations implemented the practice. Much of the movement preferred the ceremony of confirmation to Bar Mitzvah. Congregations began to reintroduce the Bar Mitzvah as a basis for Hebrew instruction. See Michael Meyer, *Response to Modernity* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1995), 223, 373-374.

¹²¹Only a few students chose to become B'nai Mitzvah.

began to encourage it in 1956. He commented in a letter to the board that more and more boys were asking for B'nai Mitzvah training and he welcomed it because it allowed for better instruction.¹²²

The curriculum of the religious school sheds light on how Rauch viewed young people. They were simply young Jews in training to be Jewish adults. As such, the temple's religious school incorporated many of the elements that characterized adult Jewish life. Rauch believed that faith, ethics, and morality were more important in religious study than history, geography, and chronology. To him, religion was not accomplishing its goal if it did not inspire worship. Because of this notion, each Sunday included a full worship service with a full liturgy, a sermon and all the elements of the adult service. This service was led by children; younger children read the service and the older ones prepared and delivered sermonettes.¹²³ In later years, Rauch and Rabbi Herbert Waller¹²⁴ alternately delivered sermonettes to the religious school students to express to them how serious they were viewed by the rabbis.¹²⁵

Rauch had great patience in all matters, but specifically in his attempt to bring the congregation to where he thought they should be. Even if it took ten years to integrate an important value into the program, he proved he could wait until either the membership, or the situation, demanded the change. The reintroduction of Hebrew instruction is an example of this style. In 1928, the board reintroduced the instruction of Hebrew into the

¹²²Letter to the Board of Trustees, April 10, 1956.

¹²³Brochure of Education, 1919-1920.

¹²⁴Rabbi Herbert S. Waller was engaged as Assistant Rabbi of Adath Israel in 1947. He was born in Memphis, Tennessee, and served as rabbi of Temple Israel of Columbus, Georgia, before accepting the invitation to join Rauch in Louisville. Waller earned a BA at Southwestern University and a MA at the University of Cincinnati. He was ordained by HUC in Cincinnati in 1939. In 1949 he earned the Doctor of Theology degree from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He also was awarded the Doctor of Divinity degree by HUC. Waller continued on as the Senior Rabbi of Adath Israel after Rauch's death in 1957.

¹²⁵Letter to the Board of Trustees, January 7, 1953.

school curriculum. They did so on a voluntary basis, so participation in the program was optional. As the years went on, the majority of the students opted into the Hebrew program and it became a problem as to what to do with those who opted out. In 1943, Rauch wrote a letter to J.M. Fuhrman, who was chairman of the religious school, committee and announced that the time had arrived to integrate Hebrew fully into the curriculum as a standard.

Rauch believed strongly that the religious school's curriculum would have little or no lasting benefit if it was not reinforced in the home as well. He repeatedly stressed this point. He taught that Judaism has been maintained through the generations by three institutions: the home, the religious school, and the synagogue. A religious school "unites Israel" through the connections that the children experience. A religious school served as a link between the home and the synagogue.¹²⁶ Rauch was deeply concerned about those "Jewish" homes that did not reinforce the lessons taught in the religious school. His reports included very strongly worded exhortations to those who did not contribute to their children's religious education at home. He believed that the religious school alone could not shoulder the responsibility for educating the young. In an article entitled "An Appeal," Rauch wrote to the families of religious school children and asked very directly that they take an active role with their children. He reversed the Talmudic adage that fathers are responsible to teach their children when he stated that, "We want the home to be a continuation school of the Temple and the mother the associated teacher of the formal instructor."¹²⁷

¹²⁶Brochure of Education, 1914-1915.

¹²⁷Temple Bulletin, October 1915.

In 1923, the religious school began to face serious space shortages.¹²⁸ This issue would plague Rauch for nearly the next thirty years. In 1924, Rauch called on the Board of Trustees to construct a building appropriate for the religious school. He envisioned a building that would be spacious enough for classes and special programming. He also wanted the building to be equipped with the technology of the day.¹²⁹ It would be 25 years before the synagogue began to work toward building a new edifice for the school. In 1948, Rauch began to campaign aggressively for a new building. He calculated that, if the membership would simply give to the temple that year what they normally gave to United Jewish Appeal, the Jewish Hospital Association, the YMHA, and the Community Chest, they would be able to build a building.¹³⁰ It did not take long before the board committed to a capital campaign in order to raise \$150,000.00¹³¹ for the endeavor. Unfortunately the money did not come in as quickly as they hoped. At one point the board asked that Rauch authorize the use of funds from the Adath Israel Memorial Fund.¹³² As much as he wanted the new building for the religious school, he was not willing to grant the funds. He believed that using the Memorial Fund for the new edifice would be a misappropriation of the fund. Eventually, the temple built the new religious school building, Rauch's dream for thirty years, and dedicated it in 1952.

Rauch used yet another means of conveying the spirit and message of Judaism through various programmatic opportunities sponsored by the temple. The catalogue of temple programming would comprise a small work of its own, but general categories can

¹²⁸Brochure of Education, 1923-24.

¹²⁹Brochure of Education, 1924-25.

¹³⁰Letter to the Board of Trustees, September 14, 1948.

¹³¹Board minutes, January 10, 1950.

¹³²This was a fund that Rauch created and administered for the purpose of sponsoring Jewish education in remote areas of Kentucky. This Fund will be discussed later in the chapter.

be gleaned from the temple's record, which definitely reflects Rauch's vision. Rauch charged his board with supporting programming more than any other responsibility they might have assumed. This is significant because he placed temple participation above all else with which the board members might occupy themselves, such as the business aspects of running the temple. In congratulating the newly elected board in 1947, Rauch explained that their "highest job" was to support and attend all temple programs.¹³³

Fellowship was extremely important to Rauch's concept of temple life. He wanted the members of the temple to feel connected to each other, to their rabbi and, as a result, to their Judaism. From time to time, he encouraged the worship committee to make Friday evening worship services more welcoming. He believed that promoting fellowship was one of the rabbi's most important programmatic responsibilities in his pulpit. He often wrote about this subject to the board. Early in his career, he made regular visits to all the temple's new members and oftentimes to older members as well. By 1948, however, the membership had spread across the city. As such, Mrs. Rauch and he began a program of entertaining couples in their home on Sunday evenings. They invited small groups over in order to get to know them firsthand. As he told the board, he created this idea because fellowship had become more important than ever before as new people moved to town and began searching for a congregation to join. Significantly he called these gatherings, "At Home."¹³⁴

Adult study was also a significant programmatic concern for Rauch. More so after the arrival of Assistant Rabbi Waller, but certainly throughout his rabbinate, Rauch encouraged adult study. He frequently lectured to the Sisterhood, structured his sermons

¹³³Letter to the board, November 11, 1947.

¹³⁴Letter to the board, December 14, 1948.

on relevant scholarship, and encouraged both the Sisterhood and the Brotherhood to bring speakers in for the edification of all members. The temple's adult education program included presentations by government officials, college professors, famous Jewish scholars, and visiting clergy.

In the fall of 1944, Rauch asked Sol Marx, a member of the Board, to consider the creation of an Adath Israel Men's Club. The club was subsequently formed on January 25, 1945. It certainly filled a need in the congregation, because before they even had their first membership drive, 200 men signed up to be members. In commenting on this phenomenon, Rauch said, "Fellowship is increasing, and our members by coming to the Temple meetings actually feel, that the Temple is their temple – some of the austerity and coldness heretofore present is vanishing." This was Rauch's exact goal with all the programming he influenced; Jewish identification and loyalty coupled with fellowship and warmth. The temple's new Brotherhood collaborated on the work that the Sisterhood had been doing for many years. They attempted to revitalize the youth league, they worked to retire the temple debt, and they sought to develop new leadership for the future of the temple.¹³⁵

Holiday celebrations also comprised a major part of the programmatic aspect of Adath Israel. Rauch orchestrated communal observance for all holidays but he especially emphasized holidays in the religious school. He wrote more vividly about Passover and Hanukkah gatherings in the bulletin than about any other holiday. This may indicate that these were the favorites of the membership, probably because these holidays centered on home observance. Whatever the holiday, Rauch created a meaningful and memorable

¹³⁵Board minutes, November 1945.

atmosphere. He strongly encouraged the leadership and the general membership to come and join in the celebrations.

During Rauch's rabbinate, the temple initiated two programs that were designed for people outside the congregation. In 1947, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC) and Hebrew Union College (HUC) influenced Rauch to hold two separate events. The UAHC American Jewish Cavalcade and the HUC Institute were programs designed to bring the message of Judaism to the wider community. Hosted by Rauch and Adath Israel, clergy and other citizens of Louisville were invited to spend time over a series of days in the temple learning from Jewish scholars about Judaism. Both programs were designed to be scholarly and social while promoting interfaith cooperation and spirituality.¹³⁶

Philanthropy was a way of life for Rauch.¹³⁷ Through his own disbursements, and in encouraging the membership to give willingly of their money, Rauch made significant contributions the world over. While the welfare of all people was close to his heart, Rauch was concerned greatly with the community making contributions to the synagogue. In 1937, he declared to the board that it was time to make a program of educating the congregation on making bequests to the synagogue. He cited that "the lists throughout the city are receiving donations, but the Temple is not."¹³⁸ Rauch proved to

¹³⁶Letters to the Board of Trustees, October 14, 1947, and December 3, 1947. An exposé on the UAHC Cavalcade can be found in "*Liberal Judaism*," UAHC, December 1947, on the back cover. It describes the UAHC American Jewish Cavalcade as a town hall discussion emphasizing themes via lectures such as; The Beginnings of Liberal Judaism, Liberal Judaism Today, The institutions of Liberal Judaism, Taking Stock of Our Local Congregation, The Good Jew Defended, The Jewish Family and The Jewish Home, Jew and Non-Jew Get Together, and The Cost of Religious Organizations. An editorial in the January 1948 issue of *Liberal Judaism* states that the Cavalcade has a "twofold task to proclaim the divine synthesis of Judaism and democracy, and to relearn the intrinsic value, unique, and self-justifying values of our way of life." The HUC Institute appears to have been an extension of the Cavalcade.

¹³⁷The notion of philanthropy and the rabbi will be discussed in detail in chapter four.

¹³⁸Letter to the board, October 21, 1937.

be an able businessman as well as clergyman. He was apt at helping his congregants understand that they were responsible for keeping the congregation financially healthy as well as looking after the less fortunate and needy the world over.

As stated in the previous chapter, much of the work that Rauch did as a pulpit rabbi extended beyond the congregation. There were endeavors in which he partook that were solely academic, or specifically for the greater good of the national movements of which he was a part. But a great deal of his work outside Adath Israel was in direct connection to his work as a pulpit rabbi. He viewed every activity in which he was engaged as a benefit to the congregation. He sought to connect Louisville Jewry to the rest of the community in all aspects of life. He worked hard to achieve this and the congregation appreciated it from the very beginning. As early as 1917, Adath Israel's annual report took note of Rauch's great involvement across Louisville. It read, "He has won praises in every circle of our community, both for himself and for the congregation he represents."¹³⁹ These were not simply words of pride. It was obvious that the temple benefited from their rabbi's citywide prominence. In 1932, the high regard with which Rauch was held in the general community was noted as "a brilliant example of Jewish eminence in public life."¹⁴⁰ The benefits were clear to Rauch and to the congregation. He was seen as having "done more than any other man of our generation to strengthen the ties between Jew and non-Jew."¹⁴¹

So much of what Rauch attempted in the community was done simply to help disseminate the richness of Judaism. In 1924, he recommended that the board and the Sisterhood each donate \$1000.00 for the creation of an Adath Israel Alcove at the

¹³⁹Board minutes, September 10, 1917.

¹⁴⁰Board minutes, Annual Report of 1932.

¹⁴¹Board minutes, October 29, 1931.

University of Louisville library, which would house Jewish books giving wide access to anyone curious. In speaking about why he put so much effort into working in the wider community, Rauch stated, "While it is never possible to estimate the results from such interfaith activities, it may be said that it helps maintain the liberal religious institutions and to keep our congregation in the ranks of the progressive religious institutions in the city."¹⁴² When the window at the First Unitarian Church was dedicated to him in 1955, the plaque read, "Dedicated to Joseph Rauch, Congregation Adath Israel, Eminent Rabbi and Good Friend." Rauch perceived this recognition not just as an honor to him, but to the entire congregation which made his interfaith work possible. In a letter to the board, he wrote, "Whatever I have been able to do in my ministry here was always through Adath Israel. With me, Adath Israel was and is always first."¹⁴³

Rauch's reach as a religious educator extended all the way into the lives of Jews who lived in remote areas. For seven years Rauch tried to launch what he hoped to call the Adath Israel Memorial Foundation. He succeeded in doing so in 1923. As he described it, "I regard the foundation as the most far-reaching undertaking sponsored by Adath Israel and one which in due time will be a new ideal before the Jewish communities of our land."¹⁴⁴

Rauch's goal for the Memorial Foundation was to provide for the substantiation of Judaism for those Jews who lived beyond the reach of any urban congregation. Rauch believed that the greatest problem facing Jewish people in the "far flung" communities was their separation from all things Jewish. Rauch never explicitly stated why he was so

¹⁴²Letter to the board, March 3, 1951.

¹⁴³The window dedicated to Rauch was explained in Chapter 1. The source of his statements in this chapter regarding the window is found in a letter to the Board of Trustees dated, May 10, 1955.

¹⁴⁴Letter to the board, October 23, 1923.

determined to make this fund in particular a reality. It can therefore be surmised that Rauch was aware of the travails in these disconnected communities. There were few Jewish centers in Kentucky during Rauch's time, which meant that most rural Jewish families had to travel exceeding long distances to congregate with other Jews. Rauch may have also come into contact with such families as he traveled back and forth from speaking engagements across Kentucky. Additionally, as one of relatively few rabbis in Kentucky, Rauch likely received requests to officiate over Jewish life cycle events in these outlying areas. Rauch ultimately hoped to fund field workers who could minister to these small communities on a regular basis.¹⁴⁵ He hoped that Adath Israel's work in this area would become a model for other congregations with great wealth. When Rauch died, the Adath Israel Memorial Foundation was still growing and benefiting those for whom it was created.

On October 10, 1946, Rauch wrote to the Board of Trustees to ask them to hire a Director of Education who could revitalize the youth program. Rauch did not request that this person be a rabbi. A meeting subsequently was called to discuss Rauch's request and the desire by many in the leadership to engage an ordained rabbi was reflected in the minutes. The board, after some debate, unanimously voted to search for a rabbi even though Rauch strongly felt that the candidate need not be a rabbi. At that time, the board stated that they did not often disagree with Rauch, but that in this instance, they needed to think of the congregation's needs first. The letter to the congregation announcing their decision indicated that the desire for a rabbi was based on the fact that his job description would include "youth group, supervision of the religious school, and to officiate at

¹⁴⁵Letter to the board, October 23, 1923.

services during the absence of Joseph Rauch.”¹⁴⁶ Rabbi Herbert Waller was engaged, and he worked alongside Rauch for the remainder of Rauch’s life. Waller enabled Rauch to continue serving as best he could as his health deteriorated, particularly, over the last decade of his life. At times, Waller assumed significant leadership in the congregation. Even so, when Rauch was ill and in the hospital, he continued to communicate personally to the board, except for when he was most sick. Rauch told the board on several occasions how well he and Waller worked together. He repeatedly recommended Waller for promotions and near the end of Rauch’s life, insisted that Waller’s title be equal to his own, simply “rabbi.”¹⁴⁷ Everyone at the temple tried to assist Rauch so that their beloved rabbi could continue to serve the congregation. After a major illness in 1954, the congregation installed lifts at the temple and in Rauch’s home to assist him.¹⁴⁸

Rauch gave his entire life to his rabbinate. On the occasion of his 70th birthday, he wrote to the board stating, “The major part of my life, whether viewed in terms of years or in the rabbinate, have been with Adath Israel and so the occasion was deeply and intensely personal to me.”¹⁴⁹ When Rauch died in his sleep in 1957, he was still serving as fulltime rabbi at Adath Israel.

It is clear that Rauch’s highest priority in his pulpit rabbinate was to elevate his congregation to engage in Jewish life. An active Jewish life required participation in the life of the temple. Rauch preached this extensive participation in many ways. From temple bulletins to charges he made to the board to sermons from the pulpit, Rauch made it known that a full Jewish life had requirements. Achieving this meant a solid basis in

¹⁴⁶The letter was dated October 10, 1946.

¹⁴⁷As opposed to Assistant Rabbi, or Associate Rabbi.

¹⁴⁸Rauch thanked the board for the lifts in a letter to the board dated April 9, 1954.

¹⁴⁹Letter to the board, January 9, 1951.

Jewish knowledge, for once the average Jew was aware of Judaism's great teachings and moral and ethical lessons, then they would be motivated naturally to worship and philanthropy.

Rauch sought for Adath Israel to portray one consistent mission to its congregants. That mission included worship, Jewish values, education, community involvement, and fellowship. Rauch acknowledged through his actions, and his words, that the physical environment was important to the endeavors of temple life. He achieved a new religious school building which showed just how important was Jewish education in his vision of Jewish life. Rauch expected much from the congregation, including financial support for their institution. In addition to philanthropy for those who were less fortunate, both financially and spiritually.

Through Rauch's interactions with the members of Adath Israel, especially the Board of Trustees, his growth as a rabbi is evident. When Rauch came to Adath Israel he was relatively young. At the age of 31, he was likely of similar age of the children of the leadership of the congregation. It may be surmised that Rauch's work with that first generation of leaders in Louisville was markedly different from his rabbinate with the subsequent generation. Rauch's interactions with the governing body as recorded in the temple record illustrate this shift. He was able to evolve his manner of interaction with the board over the years. As will be illustrated through Rauch's sermons in chapter four, he remained consistent in his religious ideology throughout his life. But his expression of that ideology evolved with the growth of the Reform movement as can be seen through his introduction of Bar Mitzvah training.

This chapter attempted to illustrate Rauch's vision of Judaism through the perspective his of pulpit rabbinate and the congregation which he served for more than 44 years. The next chapter addresses Rauch's activities beyond the scope of his work in the congregation by looking at his affiliations on both the national and international stage.

Chapter 3

The purpose of this chapter is to delineate the national and international activities and interests in which Joseph Rauch participated. During his rabbinate, Rauch participated in a wide array of causes and organizations. Rauch served in leadership roles in virtually every group to which he pledged membership. He pursued his ideals locally, nationally, and internationally, always seeking to promote the causes that were of primary interest to him. These causes included fellowship, worship, the extension of progressive Jewish values throughout the world, and increased freedom for all people. This chapter examines Rauch's contributions to the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR)¹⁵⁰ and the World Union for Progressive Judaism (WUPJ).¹⁵¹ It also analyzes Rauch's involvement in groups such as the Freemasons¹⁵² and the Rotary Club.¹⁵³

¹⁵⁰ The Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) was founded in 1889 by Isaac Mayer Wise. The CCAR was created as a union for rabbis. From its inception, it was wholly a Reform institution. It was the last significant institution founded in the Movement in the nineteenth Century. It was created to unite the rabbis of the Movement and to help address occupational concerns. As a body it took stands on Jewish issues, and offered support to the Movement's rabbis. Its members are either alumni from HUC-JIR or from other liberal seminaries. It also claims members from other seminaries who have subsequently joined the Reform movement. See also Michael Meyer, *Response to Modernity* (Detroit: Wayne State University, 1988); and WWW.CCARNET.ORG.

¹⁵¹ "The World Union for Progressive Judaism (WUPJ), established in London in 1926 is the largest body of religious Jews in the world. Its basic aims are, first, to create common ground between its constituents and, second, to promote Progressive Judaism in places where individuals and groups are seeking authentic, yet modern ways of expressing themselves as Jews. The World Union for Progressive Judaism serves congregations and communities in nearly 40 countries, encompassing more than 1,200 Reform, Progressive, Liberal and Reconstructionist congregations and more than 1.5 million members throughout the world. Its international headquarters is in Jerusalem, with regional offices in London and Moscow. In North America, ARZA/World Union, North America is the representative of the World Union for Progressive Judaism." Taken from the official overview of the WUPJ. See also Michael Meyer, *Response to Modernity* (Detroit: Wayne State University, 1988); and WWW.WUPJ.ORG.

¹⁵² Freemasonry refers to a secret society known as the "secret fraternal order of Free and Accepted Masons. Its origin is unknown and possibly dates back to the Middle Ages and the guilds of stonemasons. The group organizes by lodges and holds meetings and activities. One climbs in rank in each specific lodge according to a system of degrees. For more information, see *Freemasonry*. Encyclopaedia Britannica. Retrieved October 27, 2003, from Encyclopaedia Britannica Online; and R. William Weisberger, editor, *Freemasonry on Both Sides of the Atlantic* (New York: East European Monographs, 2002).

¹⁵³ The Rotary club was first founded in Chicago in 1905 to help promote social activism among professionals in the community. It was founded by Paul P. Harris. It takes its name from the concept that meetings were to be rotated among members for the responsibility of hosting. Some groups instituted

There is no question that the organization to which Rauch gave the most energy was the Central Conference of American Rabbis. Rauch served on many committees and played a leading role in the ranks of its leadership. Of the many committees to which Rauch contributed, he chaired the Committee on Revision of Weekday Services,¹⁵⁴ the committee on Church and State (1932-1937), the Program Committee (1936), the Nominating Committee, and the committee that ultimately produced the first *CCAR Manual for the Instruction of Proselytes* (1924-1928).

Rauch served as the chairman of the committee on Church and State from 1932 until 1937. His work as chairman is summarized in his annual reports to the conference, each of which may be found in the CCAR Yearbooks¹⁵⁵ from those years. He authored and delivered comprehensive reports to the conference each year except 1937. Though we cannot say for certain, it appears that another member of the committee took over his role in 1937, and ultimately delivered the annual report. It is certain, as can be ascertained from reading the reports Rauch wrote, that the purpose of the Committee on Church and State was to analyze situations, offer suggestions, and to do anything and everything in the power of the conference, to maintain a strict "wall of separation" between church and state. The separation of church and state was one of Rauch's core values. Rauch's view on Zionism, as shall be seen later in this chapter, was linked to this issue even though he never directly says so. He simply feared the ramifications of mixing religion and government. Rauch believed that the freedoms preserved by the

quotas from each profession in their membership to ensure equal representation in the community. For more information, see *Rotary International*. Encyclopaedia Britannica.

¹⁵⁴ No notes, nor correspondence, are extant from his service on this committee. What does remain is a paper that Rauch delivered to the CCAR on the Hamburg Temple prayer book. This paper is addressed in the chapter on his sermons and academic accomplishments.

¹⁵⁵ The CCAR annually publishes yearbooks, which contain the minutes and discussions from the annual conference meeting. The yearbooks contain the reports brought to the conference by each committee, as well as conference lectures, memorials, and other significant announcements.

government of the United States could not be mixed with religion. When they did mix, they led to ecclesiastical religious coercion. Once religion entered the realm of the state, such as in the case of public schools, educators might emphasize it in the same manner as topics that comprised the required material in such education. If a teacher was allowed to impose biblical learning at will, religious freedom no longer existed. At the same time, Rauch also understood that religious education was an important element of the education of youth. That is why he was also passionate about his temple's program of religious education. Nonetheless, throughout his career, he insisted that the two should never mix. This he made clear through his role on the committee.

During the annual report of the Committee on Church and State for 1932, Rauch proclaimed it had been a quiet year because "no news is good news." It was a quiet year on the issue of separation of church and state because most of the religious denominations were busy with the issues surrounding the 18th amendment.¹⁵⁶ It was also a quiet year because very few responses were submitted to the inquiries made by the committee. Most of the information gleaned by the committee came by way of the Jewish Press across the nation. Only seven states submitted reports to the committee.¹⁵⁷ The issues that were noted by the committee would lead one to ascertain that 1932 was a year in which many advances were made in keeping church and state separate. In California, Christmas celebrations were eliminated from public schools. In New York a proposal was defeated to give students credit for courses in Christian dogma. In Washington State a proposal was defeated to bring Bible study into the schools, and in Wisconsin, absence from public schools for religious training was allowed. One area of

¹⁵⁶The 18th amendment was the Prohibition Act. It was enacted into law in 1918 and was repealed in 1933.

¹⁵⁷*CCAR Yearbook*, Volume XLII.

concern that emerged in 1932 was a proposal to use religious instruction in Washington D.C.'s public schools to aid in teaching moral values. Rauch vigorously opposed this initiative even though it was merely a general proposal. Rauch did not deny the value of religious influence in teaching morals. But he did oppose its application in the public arena because one could not control for sectarianism. Most significantly, in Maryland, Judge Eugene O'Dunne of the Superior Court in Baltimore, in reference to a ruling on Sabbath Laws, stated that, "We are not a Christian nation in the legal sense at all."¹⁵⁸ Rauch included this quote in his report because he believed it to be a good interpretation of the separation of church and state and a good basis for the work of the committee.¹⁵⁹

In comparison to 1932, 1933 was a more problematic year. In reference to those who wanted to inject religion into the realm of the state, Rauch commented, "Your chairman is of the opinion that their activities are becoming more numerous as well as more intensive."¹⁶⁰ According to submissions to the committee, teachers were discriminated against in Illinois because of their religion. Of even greater concern to Rauch was the apparent crossing of boundaries by the Jewish community in its attempt to combat sectarian teaching in the public schools. This issue was the focus of concern in correspondence between Rauch and Rabbi Albert Minda.¹⁶¹ According to Rauch, that

¹⁵⁸The full quote from Judge Eugene O'Dunne's ruling states, "My decision...is that Christianity is not part of the Common law of Maryland as a legal proposition; that is it not part of the Common law of England, and that it is not a the function of any court in the country where church and state are separated to undertake to infuse into the law those religious principles in which an individual may believe, and to try to use the medium of law, as a vehicle to further Christianity, or to further his conception of Christianity and to get them incorporated into the body politic. That is no function of Government. We are not a Christian nation in the legal sense at all."

¹⁵⁹All information pertaining to the year 1932 comes from the annual report found in *CCAR Yearbook*, Volume XLII (1932).

¹⁶⁰*CCAR Yearbook*, Volume XLIII.

¹⁶¹Rabbi Albert G. Minda (1895-1977) was ordained by the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati in 1919 and served for three years at Temple Beth El in South Bend, Indiana, before going to Temple Israel in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in 1921. He became emeritus rabbi of that congregation in 1963. He died in 1977.

which Rabbi Minda reported as a success in the Minneapolis Public Schools actually was a troubling scenario. Students at North High School on the north side of Minneapolis, in response to Christian celebrations in public schools, undertook successfully to celebrate Chanukah in the public high school. Rauch expressed his concern about this activity to Minda, stating that it was no better to have the Jewish community cross the line separating church and state than it was if the Christian community did. Rauch preferred to keep all religious activities and celebrations out of the public schools whether Christian or Jewish. Separating church and state was simply never an issue of balancing one religion with another for Rauch. It was a matter of keeping it entirely out of the public sphere.

In the aforementioned matter of students being released from school for religious instruction, Rauch stated an official CCAR resolution as his opinion. A request from Indiana on the topic elicited this response; "We oppose the plan to release children from school hours for religious training or any effort which seeks to link up religious education with the public schools."¹⁶² This was an issue with which Rauch never really came to terms. He was uneasy about students being dismissed from school for religious training. It appeared to him that religious school, even if in a different location, held during the time allotment for public schools, equaled sectarian schooling condoned by the governing body.

The last major issue that took place in 1933 occurred in Rauch's own state of Kentucky. The laws of Kentucky required daily Bible readings in each school. This did not seem to bother Rauch as long as these lessons were accomplished, as much as

¹⁶²This is an excerpt from the CCAR resolution on the matter found in the *CCAR Yearbook*, Vol. XLI: page 49.

possible, without sectarianism. Yet, when ministers took it upon themselves, without a mandate, to prepare specific texts and then to distribute them to teachers through school principals, Rauch took issue. He wrote, "Your chairman took up with the Board of Education and pointed out how the schools were being used to further sectarian purposes, with the result that the board instructed the superintendent to recall the folders and not to distribute them again through the schools." What mattered most to Rauch was not that the ministers prepared the texts per se, but that the principals had distributed them to the teachers, which made it appear as though they were required lessons with a specific slant.¹⁶³

Nineteen Thirty Four was again a quiet year. Only a few issues emerged, but they both provide illustrations of Rauch's ideology about how best to handle controversial issues of church and state. In Arkansas, there was concern about the use of Charles Dickens's book, Life of Jesus, in the public schools. Rauch was appreciative of the fact that Rabbi David B. Alpert dealt with the situation "quietly, wisely refraining from making formal protest and in each instance secured satisfactory results."¹⁶⁴ Rauch preferred not to bring undue public attention to the Jewish community regarding such issues. He preferred working in a calm, quiet manner to combat issues of this sort. The other issue that came to light that year dealt with the purview of the committee. Some requests for the committee's help were submitted, including the case of pro-Nazi propaganda at Louisiana State University. Rauch was quick to determine that issues

¹⁶³The information regarding 1933 can be found in the *CCAR Yearbook*, Volume XLIII.

¹⁶⁴*CCAR Yearbook*, Volume XLIV.

"pertaining to content vs. process" were in the purview of the Anti-Defamation League,¹⁶⁵ not the Committee on Church and State.¹⁶⁶

Of the little information gathered by the CCAR's committee in 1935, much of it was positive. A major success was reported in Texas. Rabbi Ephraim Frisch¹⁶⁷ was allowed to meet with the State Board of Education and other prominent officials, as well as representatives from companies that published textbooks for the public schools. Frisch presented numerous examples from the textbooks in which Jews and Judaism were depicted unfairly. This became an ongoing project for Frisch and, with the support of the committee, he was able to accomplish a great deal in the reformation of textbooks in that state. Textbooks represent a very important and problematic aspect of the separation of church and state. Through textbooks, thoughts and ideas are institutionalized. Few people, especially young people, question such content. In state sponsored education, neutrality and objectivity is necessary to avoid religious sectarianism and untruthful information from seeping into the school system. Rauch also reported that he was pleased that a book had been written¹⁶⁸ that echoed exactly the sentiments of the CCAR on the matter of church and state and the public schools. He believed that this book

¹⁶⁵The Anti-Defamation League was established in 1913 to combat anti-Semitism. The charter reads, "The immediate object of the League is to stop, by appeals to reason and conscience and, if necessary, by appeals to law, the defamation of the Jewish people. Its ultimate purpose is to secure justice and fair treatment to all citizens alike and to put an end forever to unjust and unfair discrimination against and ridicule of any sect or body of citizens." See also WWW.ADL.COM; and Jacob Rader Marcus. *The American Jew: 1585-1990* (Brooklyn: Carlson Publishing, 1995).

¹⁶⁶The information regarding 1934 can be found in the *CCAR Yearbook*, Volume XLIV.

¹⁶⁷Ephraim Frisch was born on October 1, 1880, in Shubolz, Lithuania, and died on December 24, 1957, in New York City. He was rabbi at Temple Beth El in San Antonio, Texas (1923-1942), and was named Rabbi Emeritus in 1942. He was a social activist. He was active in the CCAR on the committee for the revision of the Prayer book. He also served on the board of governors of HUC. For more information see *American Jewish Yearbook*, 60:355.

¹⁶⁸Alvin W. Johnson. *The Legal Status of Church-State Relationships in the United States: With Special References to the Public Schools* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1934).

expressed the CCAR's perspective so well that he urged members of the conference to buy and read it.¹⁶⁹

The year 1936 marks the last in which Rauch submitted a report to the conference on behalf of the Committee on Church and State.¹⁷⁰ Characteristically, Rauch began the 1936 annual report by announcing that 11 members of the committee had not responded to his satisfaction with data from their states.¹⁷¹ The second issue before the committee in 1936 was a question posed as to whether it would be appropriate for the CCAR in general, and the committee in particular, to lobby the government on behalf of stances taken by the conference. Rauch responded that, "It seems to the Chairman, however, that if we have committees to advocate certain policies and the conference has approved resolutions setting these forth, it would follow logically that it is quite in order to assist in all proper manner to have these become the law of the land."¹⁷² A third subject set forth by the committee in the annual report seems to diverge from the primary concerns of the committee as ascertained from previous reports. It does, however coincide with one of Rauch's personal interests. Rauch stated that, "Your committee recommends that our church and state representatives everywhere make it one of their tasks to arrange religious services in penal institutions, either independently or in cooperation with other interested Jewish bodies, especially in places where no other agency is doing religious work among Jewish prisoners." It is unclear why Rauch would have included this in the purview of the church-state committee when he held very tightly to its stated purpose in

¹⁶⁹The information for 1935 can be found in the *CCAR Yearbook*, Volume XLV.

¹⁷⁰He was the chairman of the Committee on Church and State until 1937.

¹⁷¹This sounded very much like what Rauch was known to write to the Board of Adath Israel about those who did not come to worship services on a regular basis.

¹⁷²*CCAR Yearbook*, XLVI.

all other areas. Rauch was very active in prison work¹⁷³ and it is possible that Rauch wanted to use the committee as a platform from which to preach on a topic that was dear to him. The final issue with which the 1936 annual report dealt was in response to a query by Rabbi Ferdinand Isserman.¹⁷⁴ Isserman wanted to know whether it was acceptable to hold Hebrew school in the edifice of a public school, after school hours concluded. Rauch concluded that while there was nothing wrong with it in theory, it was not acceptable because of *maarit ayin* (i.e. the rabbinic principle of "mistaken impressions."¹⁷⁵ Rauch's point was even though there was nothing inherently wrong with holding Hebrew lessons in that environment, the enemies of the separation of church and state might take hold of this example and use it against them to justify the teaching of religion in a public school setting. In other words, Rauch insisted that the Jewish community be held to a higher standard than that required by law in order to be pure advocates for church-state separation.

Rauch also played an instrumental role in the CCAR's committee which created *Judaism: A Manual for the Instruction of Proselytes*.¹⁷⁶ Rauch served as the Chairman of

¹⁷³Rauch was a member of the General American Committee in the International Prison Congress. He was also deputized in Louisville so that he could freely enter the prison to pastor to Jewish inmates. These facts are mentioned in various correspondence found in the American Jewish Archives on the campus of The Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati, Ohio. They can be found in Manuscript Collection 91, Box 9, folder 15. A Brochure from the Internal Prison Congress that lists his membership can be found in the Frances Shapiro-Weitzenhoffer Archives on the campus of Congregation Adath Israel Brith Shalom in Louisville, Kentucky. Rauch also preached on this topic.

¹⁷⁴Rabbi Ferdinand Myron Isserman was born in Belgium in 1898 and immigrated to the United States in 1906. He was ordained from HUC in 1922. He served the U.S. Army in WWI and after ordination served congregations in Philadelphia and Toronto. He served as Senior Rabbi of Temple Israel in St. Louis, Missouri. Isserman spent time working with the Red Cross in Europe during WWII. He was an advocate of interfaith work and active leadership for the National Conference of Christians and Jews. He died in 1977.

¹⁷⁵*Maarit Ayin* is a Talmudic principle that literally means *appearance*. This concept refers to something that might appear to be misconduct when in reality it is in accordance with custom or law. See also Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz. *The Talmud, Steinsaltz Edition, A Reference Guide* (New York: Random House, 1989), 223. The information regarding 1936 can be found in the *CCAR Yearbook*, Volume XLVI.

¹⁷⁶The Manual was first published by the CCAR in 1928. It was revised in 1946.

this committee from its inception in 1924 until it was disbanded after the manual was published in 1928. In the early twentieth century, conversion became more common in the Reform movement. Conversion occurred with enough frequency for the CCAR to create an official conversion certificate as well as the inclusion of a conversion ritual in the *Minister's Handbook*.¹⁷⁷ There are no references to the manual in any CCAR Yearbook before 1924. But, in 1924, the "Committee on Preparation of Manual for Conversion Ceremony" reported progress. In that same report, the members of the committee successfully motioned to change the name of the committee to the "Committee on Preparation of Manual for Instruction to Proselytes."¹⁷⁸ This committee undertook a pioneering venture and understood this fact. In correspondence between Rauch and Rabbi Solomon Landman¹⁷⁹ in which the latter harshly criticized the volume, Rauch responded, "you realize of course that in a sense this is a pioneer book."¹⁸⁰ In so saying, Rauch was asking for patience so that he, and his committee, might continue to gather information and ultimately to produce that which the conference desired. There appears to have been little appreciation for the manual, and much criticism of it, within the conference. This was the first endeavor of this sort by the conference, and as will be noted vis-à-vis the discussion to revise the manual in 1937, there was little consensus on its purpose. It is clear that no matter what the committee produced, it was not going to satisfy each member of the conference. The manual's content ultimately would test each

¹⁷⁷The CCAR has published various rabbi's manuals and minister's handbooks, which contain ceremonies for use in the Jewish lifecycle. The first edition, referred to here, was published by the CCAR in 1917 as the Minister's Handbook. It was revised in 1928 and published as the Rabbi's Manual.

¹⁷⁸*CCAR Yearbook*, Volume XXXIV.

¹⁷⁹Rabbi Solomon Landman was born in Cincinnati on December 17, 1895, and died in Kew Gardens, New York, on May 20, 1951. He was a rabbi, teacher, and social worker. He founded and directed the B'nai Brith Hillel on the campus of the University of Wisconsin in Madison (1924-1931).

¹⁸⁰This letter dated June 14, 1927, is located in the Joseph Rauch Papers in the American Jewish Archives.

rabbi's view of what should be taught to a prospective proselyte regarding the Jewish tradition.

At the CCAR annual meeting of 1925, Rauch presented a preliminary report on the progress of the manual. At that time, he presented an outline for discussion because he did not want the production of the manual to be delayed by creating something that was not what the conference expected "as has been the case in other committees in the past."¹⁸¹ Rauch proposed that the manual consist of three parts. The first part was to deal with the history of the Jewish treatment of non-Jews. The manual would show that whoever wanted to become part of the tradition could and that they would be welcomed. Polemics were to be omitted. The committee strictly wanted to offer warmth and welcome in order to avoid the notion that the community was only "lukewarm" toward the conversion of non-Jews. This was to be accomplished by using passages from Genesis 12¹⁸² or Isaiah 56.¹⁸³ Ultimately these and other Biblical quotes were used.¹⁸⁴ Rauch's goal was to make it explicit that Judaism always has welcomed strangers into the

¹⁸¹This was mentioned in the preliminary report on the manual to the CCAR Conference in 1925.

¹⁸²Excerpted from the manual, "Jewish tradition has it that as early as the time of the patriarch Abraham, we realized that it was our God-given task to make our faith known to others and if possible to attract them to it. Abraham was not bidden to compel people to accept his belief but so to live himself and so to make known his religion that both would be blessings. This is what Judaism aims to do. 'Now the lord said unto Abraham: Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and be thou a blessing, and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.'" (Genesis 12:1-3)

¹⁸³Excerpted from the manual, "A few centuries later the prophet Isaiah taught exactly the same things in words of unsurpassed beauty and loftiness: 'Neither the alien, that hath joined himself to the Lord, speak saying: The Lord will surely separate me from His people.' Also the aliens, that join themselves to the Lord, to minister unto Him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be His servants, every one that keepeth the Sabbath from profaning it, and holdeth fast by My covenant: even them will I bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be acceptable upon Mine altar; for My house shall be called a house of prayers for all peoples, saith the Lord God who gathereth the dispersed of Israel.'" (Isaiah 56:6-7) This Isaiah quote is synonymous with Classical Reform Judaism. Many edifices of the Reform institutions from that time period bear these words.

¹⁸⁴The manual includes Leviticus 15:14-16 which states that "one law and one ordinance" shall be for the Israelites and for the stranger; Deuteronomy 10:19, which states that the Israelites must accept the stranger because they were strangers in Egypt; I Kings 8:41-43, which also deals with the stranger; and two passages from the Book of Ruth which have become the paradigmatic text for proselytes to Judaism.

fold. Rauch's proposed outline also recommended the use of selected Talmud texts,¹⁸⁵ Maimonides' letter to Obadiah,¹⁸⁶ and possibly even quotes from the New Testament¹⁸⁷ concerning proselytes to Judaism would be used to support the notion of welcoming the non-Jew into the fold. The outline suggested the inclusion of an explanation as to why Judaism had desisted from active proselytizing for the last two thousand years¹⁸⁸ and to end with a clear invitation to the non-Jew to join the fold and a "brief description of the history of Israel to show the place and purpose of Judaism for the non-Jew."¹⁸⁹

The second part of the manual, as envisioned by Rauch, was to include the "cardinal teachings" that the committee wished to teach the non-Jew. "These should be brief...there is no need to overwhelm with dogma and theology." He urged that they should not demand more of the non-Jew than the "loyal and intelligent" Jew already gives to the religion. He was concerned that a more thorough presentation would scare the prospective proselyte away. As a result, the manual's final form was more like a bound pamphlet. This of course elicited much criticism from its critics. The outline suggested that the CCAR would want to attract the non-Jew to Judaism by teaching seven specific areas. These areas were to include (a) the conception of God along the lines of

¹⁸⁵The manual includes an explanation of the Talmud, and the Talmud's inclusion of a treatise "devoted to setting forth what should be our attitude to the person who wishes to accept Judaism as his religion." The manual also quotes from Massecheth Gerim stating, "Beloved are the proselytes unto God for He speaks of them in the same tender way as He does of Israel."

¹⁸⁶The manual does not explicitly mention the letter to Obadiah, but it does summarize Maimonides as stating that the "newcomer to Judaism is to be received with open arms and is to be granted every privilege enjoyed by the Jewish people; that from the moment he has been accepted into the fold there must be no difference between him and the rest of the Jewish People."

¹⁸⁷This suggestion did not ultimately make the final revision.

¹⁸⁸This was not ultimately included in the manual.

¹⁸⁹In a report to the CCAR annual meeting in Cape May during 1927, Rauch reported that he was not happy about the inclusion of the chapter on history. He felt its inclusion was hastily decided and that better resources were available to the proselyte. He asked for counsel as to whether it should be retained. After discussion, it was moved to remove the chapter and to include a list of resources where the history of Judaism could be found. A bibliography was attached that included Graetz's History of the Jews, Elbogen's History of the Jews, and The History of the Jewish People by Margolis and Marx.

ethical monotheism, (b) individual responsibility vs. vicarious atonement, (c) Revelation, (d) Judaism's place and purpose in the world, (e) Israel as the Chosen People, (f) the spiritual unity of Judaism, and (g) the place of the synagogue in Jewish religious life.¹⁹⁰

These seven categories were envisioned in order to present the basis of Judaism, along with emphasizing the differences that exist between Judaism and Christianity.¹⁹¹

Furthermore, the committee contended that Jewish morals and ethics were unnecessary because Jewish values had become universal. That being so, the committee suggested that the Jewish origin of these common ethics be emphasized as in the Ten Commandments, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," "Holy shall ye be for I the Lord your God am holy," the Jewish laws of charity, and the Jewish ideal of peace.¹⁹²

Finally, the outline Rauch presented suggested that the third section of the manual be comprised of Jewish rites and customs as well as the conversion process itself.¹⁹³

Regarding Jewish rites and customs, the committee chose to emphasize the Sabbath, the Festivals,¹⁹⁴ and the "Abrahamic Covenant for male children" (i.e. circumcision).¹⁹⁵

Regarding the inclusion of the Conversion Ceremony, it was suggested by the committee that the pages from the Minister's Handbook, which contained the Conversion Ceremony, be included but with a slight alteration. The committee desired to omit the

¹⁹⁰The manual included seven areas similar to these in the second section. In order, the actual chapters are Judaism: Its Purpose in the World, God, Revelation, Immortality, Israel a Chosen People, The Spiritual Unity of Israel, and the Synagogue.

¹⁹¹The committee assumed that most proselytes would be converting from Christianity. They also believed that the church had taken over Jewish values as they had become universal in society and that the converts would subsequently be knowledgeable of them.

¹⁹²Each of these was indeed included, in this order, on page 40 of the manual.

¹⁹³The CCAR adopted an official process for the conversion of proselytes in 1910.

¹⁹⁴Ultimately, the manual included a definition of "Holy Days," and specific sections on the Sabbath, Rosh Hashonah – The New Year, Yom Kippur – the Day of Atonement, Succoth – The Feast of Tabernacles, Hanukkah – The Feast of Lights or Rededication, Purim – The Feast of Lots, Pesach – Feast of Passover, and Shabuoth – The Feast of Weeks.

¹⁹⁵The manual did not ultimately include mention of the Covenant.

question which asked the convert to renounce the religion of their birth because they deemed it "harsh and unnecessary."¹⁹⁶

In 1927 at the annual meeting of the CCAR, Rauch again presented a report on the progress of his committee. At this meeting there was a lengthy discussion as to whether a distinction needed to be made between Orthodoxy and Reform, and whether the divisiveness therein should be discussed or hidden. Also discussed was whether mention of *Kashrut* (Jewish ritual dietary laws) needed to be included in this manual. The issue debated dealt with whether the Movement, vis-à-vis the manual, ought to define itself on its own terms, or in the terms of traditional Orthodox Judaism. A prospective proselyte might not understand the schism within the movements of Judaism and some of the members of the CCAR thought it would be disingenuous to ignore this fact. Motions for the inclusion of a discussion on Kashrut were made and defeated. The manual was authorized to go to press upon its completion.¹⁹⁷ At the annual meeting in 1928, Rauch reported that the manual was "finished and in the hands of the members." The committee asked to be discharged.¹⁹⁸

The completion of the manual did not mark the end of Rauch's work on it. On October 27, 1936, the Executive Committee of the CCAR, meeting at the Standard Club in Chicago, requested Rauch to reshape the manual,¹⁹⁹ "that it be an outline of Judaism to

¹⁹⁶ After discussion, it was moved and amended that question two in the conversion process be changed from "Are you ready to sever your allegiance to the religion into which you were born and reared," to "Do you renounce your former faith." The latter was ultimately included in the manual. At the end of the report, it was moved and adopted that copies of the report be sent to all members of the CCAR for criticism and suggestions. The information contained herein was gleaned from the report Rauch presented to the CCAR Conference as found in the *CCAR Yearbook*, Volume XXV and from the published version of *Judaism: A Manual for the Instruction of Proselytes*, published by the CCAR in 1928.

¹⁹⁷ *CCAR Yearbook*, Volume XXXVII.

¹⁹⁸ *CCAR Yearbook*, Volume XXXVIII.

¹⁹⁹ An exchange of letters between Rauch and Rabbi Isaac E. Marcuson, then the secretary of the CCAR, dated from January 1937 indicate that there was a misunderstanding between the Executive Committee and

be used in confirmation and study classes.”²⁰⁰ In response to the request for a new edition, a special committee consisting of Rabbi Samuel S. Cohon,²⁰¹ Rabbi Victor Reichart,²⁰² and Rauch was created to study the matter. The committee did study the matter. In a report to the CCAR submitted in 1939, Rauch reminisced that, “In the year 1928, the CCAR published its *Manual for the Instruction of Proselytes*. It was the first publication of its nature by the Conference and was something in the nature of an experiment.”²⁰³ It was only in 1939 that the “experiment” was officially evaluated by the conference. The three-person committee drafted a questionnaire²⁰⁴ regarding the use of the original manual and the need for a new one to be answered by members of the CCAR.²⁰⁵ One hundred five respondents subsequently submitted their opinions. The

Rauch pertaining to the purpose of the revision. Marcuson instructed Rauch that he was to strike all recognition of conversion from the manual as to make it into a confirmation tool. Rauch replied that he felt that if the conference wanted a confirmation manual then they should have the Commission on Jewish Education handle it. It was subsequently decided that the nature of the manual need not be altered, but that it required updating and expansion. The revision was ultimately dropped, to be picked up again at a later date. These letters can be found in the Frances Shapiro-Weitzenhoffer Archives on the campus of Congregation Adath Israel Brith Shalom in Louisville, Kentucky contained in a folder labeled, “Manual for Proselytes.”

²⁰⁰As reported in the Minutes of the Executive Committee meeting dated October 27, 1936.

²⁰¹Samuel Solomon Cohon was born during 1888 in Minsk, Belorussia. He was ordained from HUC in 1912. He served congregations in Springfield, Ohio, Zion Temple in Chicago, Illinois, and Temple Mizpah (a congregation he organized) in Chicago. He became a professor of theology at HUC in 1923. Cohon was an active member of the CCAR. He died in 1959. For more information see Encyclopedia Judaica.

²⁰²Rabbi Victor Emanuel Reichert was born in Brooklyn, New York, on March 17, 1897. He died on July 21, 1991. He earned a BA from City College of New York and a Bachelor's Degree in Literature from the Columbia School of Journalism. Reichert earned a Doctor of Divinity degree in 1932 and was awarded an honorary Doctor of Divinity from HUC in 1955. He was an authority on Medieval Hebrew Poetry. Reichert served Rockdale Avenue Temple in Cincinnati from his ordination in 1926 until he died. He was named Emeritus Rabbi in 1962.

²⁰³Taken from the report on the revisions, May 18, 1939. The report can be found in the Frances Shapiro-Weitzenhoffer Archives on the campus of Congregation Adath Israel Brith Shalom in Louisville, Kentucky.

²⁰⁴The questionnaire contained five questions: (1) Does the Conference need a Conversion manual since there is already a conversion service in the present rabbi's manual? (2) What use, if any, have you made of the manual? (3) Where in have you found it lacking? (4) Wherein have you found it helpful? (5) In what manner would you like to see it improved and enlarged so it may better serve the purpose for which it was intended?

²⁰⁵The questionnaire was sent out on March 1, 1939. Some of the responses are extant in the Frances Shapiro-Weitzenhoffer Archives on the campus of Congregation Adath Israel Brith Shalom in Louisville, Kentucky.

conclusions²⁰⁶ drawn from the responses showed that few of the criticisms had changed from the original discussion of the manual. It was thus adopted that in light of the report, "The Executive Board believes it unnecessary to reprint the book 'Judaism.'"²⁰⁷

Rauch's involvement with the CCAR also was in the capacity of leadership development. For several years, he served on the nominating committee working to help foster new leadership in the Conference. He also helped to design the programmatic side of the Conference. In 1936, Rauch, along with Rabbi Max C. Currick²⁰⁸ and Rabbi Philip S. Bernstein,²⁰⁹ was listed among the chairmen on the Program Committee.²¹⁰ They were asked to outline the Conference program for the year, including papers to be delivered on various subjects.²¹¹ One of the papers was to be on the issue of intermarriage, with which Rauch quickly proved to be intimately concerned. The three immediately went to work

²⁰⁶There were 12 basic conclusions that Rauch summarized. They were: 1. There should be a brief but comprehensive statement on Judaism. There should be an explanation of the various different forms of Judaism. The latest declaration of principles should be included. 2. There should be a chapter on Jewish History. 3. There should be a chapter on Jewish literature. 4. There should be a chapter on Jewish ideals. 5. There should be an elaboration on the holiday section. 6. There should be a chapter on Jewish ceremonies illustrating Jewish religious practices in the home and synagogue. 7. There should be a chapter on the synagogue. 8. The Jewish home should be stressed because marriage is the main reason for conversion. 9. There should be a chapter on Jewish life in the United States. 10. There should be a chapter on the differences between Christianity and Judaism. 11. A chapter should be inserted containing the formula for conversion adopted in 1910. 12. A bibliography on Jewish history, literature, and holiday observance should be included.

²⁰⁷CCAR Yearbook, XLIX.

²⁰⁸Rabbi Max Cohen Currick was born on September 1, 1877, and died on May 23, 1947. He was the rabbi of Congregation Anshe Hesed in Erie, PA, from 1901 until his death. He served as the president of the CCAR from 1937-1939. He was also on the board of governors of HUC. He chaired the board of editors for the magazine published by the UAHC, "Liberal Judaism." He died on a train from Pennsylvania to New York. See also American Jewish Yearbook, Volume 50, page 514; and the Universal Jewish Encyclopedia.

²⁰⁹Rabbi Philip S. Bernstein was born June 25, 1910, and died on December 3, 1985. He was ordained from the Jewish Institute of Religion in New York. He was the rabbi of Temple B'rith Kodesh in Rochester, New York, from 1926-1973 and was then named Rabbi Emeritus. Bernstein was advisor to Israeli Prime Ministers David Ben-Gurion and Golda Meir. He served as CCAR President from 1950-1952. The Chair in Jewish Studies at the University of Rochester is named in his honor. See also American Jewish Yearbook, Volume 87, page 436, and the Universal Jewish Encyclopedia; Encyclopedia Judaica.

²¹⁰The Program Committee served to plan the annual Conference meeting. The other chairmen were Rabbis Currick and Bernstein.

²¹¹As outlined in the minutes of the Executive Board meeting held at the Standard Club in Chicago, October 27, 1936.

planning the program. Much of their correspondence centered on Rauch's insistence that the right person be chosen to author the paper on intermarriage. In a letter to Rabbi Isaac Marcuson,²¹² Rauch stated, "I do not believe that I am the only one who does not agree with the position of the conference on this subject."²¹³ In a subsequent letter to Currick²¹⁴, Rauch urged that the paper be written by someone in the CCAR who did not agree with the Conference resolution of 1909, which resolved that intermarriage should be not be performed without conversion.²¹⁵

It was in connection to his work with the Program Committee that Rauch began to lead the charge to reform the CCAR's stance on intermarriage. In a November 6, 1936, letter to Currick, Rauch stated, "I do not think that all we need is just a marshalling of facts dealing with the subject of intermarriage. What we want is an evaluation of them in the light of Liberal Judaism and more especially how to answer young people of different faiths who come to us to be married. Merely to decline our services and to say that we do this more on the basis of a resolution passed by the conference is not sufficient reason, nor is our position very much strengthened if we say that Judaism disapproves of such matrimonial alliances. The paper should be discussed in the same spirit in which early Reform Judaism grappled with every important Jewish question and had the courage to strike out on new lines." He later added:

²¹²Marcuson was the CCAR secretary at the time and all correspondence to him was copied to the other chairmen of the Program Committee. The letter was dated September 23, 1936.

²¹³The letter was dated September 23, 1936.

²¹⁴The letter was dated November 3, 1936.

²¹⁵A motion was made at the 1935 Conference meeting that urged the writing of the paper mentioned above. The motion stated that it has become such that the CCAR position does not really reflect the actions of some rabbis and that it may "lessen the authority of the Conference and of Judaism as a whole, as well as to prove embarrassing to those rabbis who abide by the Conference decision." Thus it was resolved to devote a portion of the next conference to the discussion of intermarriage and conversion. The resolution can be found in the *CCAR Yearbook*, Volume XLV.

I have something very definite in mind in the paper that should reconsider the Conference's position on intermarriage. It is I who am responsible for bringing it up before the Executive Board asking that a paper on this theme be made part of our Program. I know that I represent a very scant minority in the Conference on this subject. The resolution of the Conference leaves no doubt as to what the large number of our members feel on this yet, I think a reconsideration, even if it does not change the official status of the Conference is very much in place. I want the minority view treated by one who is in sympathy with it. There is no sense in selecting for the paper I have in mind someone who is antithetical to it.²¹⁶

Not surprisingly, the others on the Program Committee suggested that Rauch might choose to write the paper himself. He declined because he was quite busy with both the Committee on Church and State and with his work on the revision of the Manual.

Ultimately, Louis Mann was asked to write the paper and he accepted.²¹⁷ This issue appears to have been a significant concern for Rauch, possibly beyond the specific issue of intermarriage. This notion that the CCAR might "legislate" against the individual autonomy of the rabbi was a serious one. In the least it showed that Reform Judaism might have ceased to be Reforming as far as this issue was concerned.

It was not until a decade later that Rauch publicly penned his views on the matter of intermarriage. In 1947, Rauch wrote to the editor of *Liberal Judaism* expressing his position.²¹⁸ He did so, claiming that friends had asked him to write from a perspective of intermarriage that had yet to be expressed in the magazine. He wrote that he officiated at mixed marriages. "I discourage formal conversions before marriage." Rauch was more satisfied with the "earnestness" which was proven by waiting until after marriage for conversion. In so doing, he was following his own interpretation of the rabbinic process,

²¹⁶ This latter statement was dated November 12, 1936. The letter was addressed to Currick.

²¹⁷ Louis Mann, "Intermarriage As a Practical Problem in the Ministry," *CCAR Yearbook*, Volume XLVII: 309.

²¹⁸ The editorial was published in *Liberal Judaism*, UAHC May 19, 1947. For information regarding the *Liberal Judaism*, See Gary P. Zola, "Reform Judaism Magazine," in *Popular Religious Magazines of the United States*, ed. by Mark Flacker (Westport, Conn., Greenwood Press: 1995).

which requires him to dissuade the prospective proselyte from converting.²¹⁹ Rauch also carefully explained the possible "handicaps" that came with being Jewish to candidates for conversion. He pleaded with the Jewish partner to work to make Judaism attractive to the non-Jew by leading a complete Jewish existence. The process Rauch described was more taxing on the couple than one that required conversion prior to the wedding ceremony.

It takes more time and much more effort to proceed in this way than to give the instruction contained in the formal Manual for Proselytes²²⁰ issued by the CCAR. I know this manual quite well. I wrote nearly the entire booklet that was issued by the conference in 1928. The revised and much improved edition²²¹ gotten out under the able and learned chairmanship of Dr. Bernard J. Bamberger²²² embodies much of the material in the earlier edition. When the non-Jew is ready for conversion I use the Manual. But this I do only after the marriage when there is no longer a question that the marriage will not take place unless the non-Jewish person converts to Judaism. The fact that only about half of the couples whom I have married came for instruction after marriage and were eventually converted makes me feel that there is much merit in my procedure.²²³

Rauch indicated that his preference is for strong, active, identified Jews over Jews who only converted to create an empty Jewish ceremony. In his opinion, most couples that approach the rabbi, do so to ask if the rabbi will officiate, not whether they will "grant a blessing over a proposed marriage." Regardless, he would not decline a request for officiation. "I shall not knowingly push the Jew into the church to get married." He knew that, if he said no, a liberal minister in a church would say yes. His ultimate stance

²¹⁹A rabbinic custom, based on Ruth Rabbah 2:22, instructs that the prospective proselyte must be turned away three times in order to test their sincerity.

²²⁰He incorrectly references the name of the manual.

²²¹The manual was revised and published in its second form under the same name in 1946 by the CCAR, revised by Dr. Bernard Bamberger.

²²²Bernard Jacob Bamberger was born during 1904 in Baltimore, Maryland. He was ordained by HUC in 1926. He served Temple Israel in Lafayette, Indiana (1926-1929), Congregation Beth Emeth in Albany, New York (1929-1944), and finally at Congregation Shaarey Tefila in New York City. He was a member of the Jewish Publication Society translation committee. He died in 1980. For more information see Encyclopedia Judaica.

²²³*Liberal Judaism*, UAHF May 19, 1947

was that, "life being what it is, we shall make fewer mistakes if we judge each case that presents itself to us, on its individual and distinctive merits." He then quoted Dr. Abraham Crombach,²²⁴ "formal conversion may be good and even necessary, but the real convert is he who throws himself into the stream of Jewish life." Rauch was willing to wait for the "real convert."²²⁵

The World Union for Progressive Judaism (WUPJ) was another Jewish organization to which Rauch gave much effort. At the time of his death, one newspaper memorial noted that Rauch had crossed the ocean 57 times. This would seem impossible if it was not for the fact that he and his wife Etta attended virtually every WUPJ conference and meeting. Only health and war would keep them home from a WUPJ event. Indeed they were present at the formation of the WUPJ to witness the historic galvanization of progressive Jews the world over. Rauch attended that first meeting in 1928 with other prominent American colleagues. As longtime WUPJ leader Lily Montagu²²⁶ reminisced²²⁷ in her writings, "the United States delegates had, with characteristic caution, told us in advance they came as observers. They would have to get

²²⁴ Abraham Cronbach was born on February 16, 1882 in Indianapolis and died in Cincinnati on April 2, 1965. He was ordained by HUC in 1906. He was rabbi at Temple Beth El in South Bend, Indiana directly after ordination (1906-1915). In 1915, he earned a Doctor of Divinity degree from HUC. He served as rabbi at the Free Synagogue of New York City (1915-17), Akron Hebrew Congregation (1917-1919), and as the chaplain for the Chicago Federation of Rabbis (1919-1922). In 1922 he became a professor of Social Studies at HUC where he spent the rest of his career. He was an ardent pacifist. For more information, see the *Cronbach Papers* in the American Jewish Archives.

²²⁵ A copy of the editorial can be found in the American Jewish Archives in the Joseph Rauch Papers, Manuscript Collection 91, box 9, folder 9.

²²⁶ Lillian Helen Montagu was born in 1873. She was a social worker and magistrate who founded the West Central Girls' Club in London in 1893. She pioneered Liberal Judaism in Britain and in 1902 with the help of Claude Goldsmid Montefiore, she founded the Jewish Religious Union, which funded the Liberal Jewish Synagogue. In 1926 she founded the World Union for Progressive Judaism. For more information see the *Encyclopedia Judaica*; and Ellen M. Umansky, *Lily Montagu and the Advancement of Liberal Judaism: from Vision to Vocation* (New York: E. Mellen Press, 1983).

²²⁷ Lily H. Montagu, "The Story of the First 25 years, 1926-1951," in *The World Union for Progressive Judaism, The First 25 Years, 1926-1951*. It can be found in the American Jewish Archives, MSS. COL. # 16, box j3, folder 7.

approval from their CCAR for membership in the World Union. Many of the great American leaders were present, among whom I would mention... Rabbi Joseph Rauch²²⁸... who helped us over the difficult initial stages."

Rauch was consistently a representative for the CCAR in all things European. In 1922, he was entrusted with the distribution of \$1000.00 to needy rabbis and scholars in Europe.²²⁹ Rauch was one of the CCAR *shlichim*²³⁰ to Europe. This was certainly true for his participation in the WUPJ. He regularly reported back to the CCAR about what was happening at the WUPJ. He was also the American representative in charge of an 80th birthday gift for Lily Montagu²³¹ with whom the Rauchs were extremely close.²³²

As in every other organization listed among Rauch's activities, he rose to the ranks of leadership in the WUPJ. Having delivered various minor discussions and addresses to the WUPJ members over the many years of its existence, he was well known among its constituents. In a 1939 letter, Montagu informed Rauch that he had been "co-opted" as a member of the governing body.²³³ Rauch was very excited to be elected and intended to attend the annual conference in London as usual in 1939 to participate on the

²²⁸The other leaders she listed were: Rabbi Marcus Aaron, Rabbi M.H. Harris, Rabbi M.S. Lazon, Rabbi Sheldon Blank, Rabbi Leo M. Franklin, Mrs. J. Walter Freiberg, Dr. Felix Levy, Rabbi Louis Mann, Rabbi Julian Morgenstern, Rabbi David Phillipson, Rabbi Sam Schulman, Rabbi Abram Simon, Mr. A. Leo Weil, and Rabbi Louis Wolsey.

²²⁹A letter from Dr. A. Buechler to Rauch dated December 13, 1922 details its distribution. It is printed in *CCAR Yearbook*, Volume XXXIII: 17-18.

²³⁰The plural of the Hebrew word *shaliach*, which refers, in the Jewish community, to an ambassador or emissary.

²³¹Rauch proposed to raise a fund from the American constituents to be given to her for her discretionary use. He also wanted to collect testimonials to her from each of the constituents in addition to a signed testimonial from the governing body of the CCAR. Rauch also was asked to write an essay to appear in *Liberal Judaism* on the life and work of Montagu. Correspondence regarding Montagu's birthday can be found in the American Jewish Archives, MSS. COL.#91, box 9, folder 10.

²³²Correspondence shows that the Rauchs were very close with both Lily and Marian Montagu. They traveled together as well as lodged with them in London. They attended concerts together and toured together. Their correspondence is in the American Jewish Archives, MSS. COL.#91, box 9, folder 10.

²³³The letter is dated February 1, 1939, and is found in the American Jewish Archives, MSS. COL.#16, box D29, folder 2.

governing body and to deliver the primary address. But the situation in Europe caused him to cancel his trip.²³⁴

At the annual WUPJ conference in Paris in 1955, Rauch gave the opening sermon entitled, "*Tradition and Progress*." His words summarized the first three decades of the WUPJ. He was "humbled" by who had come before him to speak to the previous conferences. He believed that Paris, the first modern place of Jewish emancipation, was the perfect location to discuss Progressive Judaism. In reference to history he claimed, "we are a miracle among the miracles that have come from the wars." But he wanted to focus on the good, not the tragedies of the previous half-century. "We make no claim to a new Judaism, we are not a sect or denomination... We but claim the right and privilege to interpret our faith in the light of our God given reason, holding that a living faith is forever undergoing adaptations according to the needs of the age... Our faith does not change, but the presentation of it does."

In laying out the "immediate tasks" of the WUPJ, Rauch sharply criticized "liberal" congregations in Israel and called them ultra-Orthodox. He commended the WUPJ for its missionary work, quoting Israel Zangwall as saying, "American Reform Judaism was forever proclaiming that Israel had a mission but it did not have a single missionary." He commented, "it was the WUPJ that found missionaries to inaugurate the work in the most distant parts of the world and did it at a time when our world was shaken by unprecedented catastrophes." The tasks as he saw them were to "enlarge and intensify the work in the areas where we are already established but where more work needs to be done." For Israel he suggested missionaries such as in Christianity. "There

²³⁴He ultimately would have gone, as he later wrote to Montagu, but he fell ill during the CCAR annual conference in Washington, D.C., had surgery and spent several weeks in the hospital. The letter dated August 25, 1939, is located in the American Jewish Archives, MSS. COL.#16, box D29, folder 2.

are many disenfranchised orthodox youth in Israel looking for a way to be Jewish."²³⁵ Secondly, he charged the WUPJ to "train rabbis to further the work of the World Union." A seminary was to be built in Paris to accomplish this.²³⁶ His third focus was on Israel as he cited that Hebrew Union College had been allowed to deed land for the establishment of a campus in Jerusalem. "Israel without sanctity, the kind of sanctity that springs only from our historic faith, is lacking in a great essential... This will not be the first time that the Diaspora has had to take over the work of the Land of Israel." He cited Babylon and the Jews of the Greco-Roman empire as examples of Diaspora communities who worked from outside Israel to maintain and build the country. He called for the WUPJ and Hebrew Union College to complement each other, saying that "Out of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute Religion goes forth the Torah and the word of the Lord out of the WUPJ."²³⁷

Zionism was an issue that Rauch spoke out against throughout his rabbinate. Through his work in the WUPJ he appears to be pro-Israel as a possible spiritual center for progressive Jews, yet he was quite opposed to the politicization of the country. Political Zionism was created by the "Lovers of Zion" and established internationally by Herzl.²³⁸ It was shunned by many leaders in the American Reform movement who viewed it as the ultimate challenge to their theological stance that the Diaspora was part

²³⁵In historical retrospect, it is the opinion of the author that the WUPJ failed on this account.

²³⁶A seminary was built under the guidance of Rabbi Andre Zouï in 1955 in Paris. Zouï had wanted to create a seminary to replace those that had been destroyed in Germany. Its first ordination was in 1960, but it dwindled from there. Because of a lack of funds and a lack of prospective rabbis who spoke French, it failed as a seminary after just a few years. For more information, see Michael Meyer, *Response to Modernity* (Detroit: Wayne State University, 1988), 347.

²³⁷The sermon was delivered on July 1, 1955, at the annual meeting of the WUPJ in Paris, France.

²³⁸Theodore Herzl was arguably the father of Modern Zionism. For more information, consult the entry entitled, "Herzl, Theodore" in the *Encyclopedia Judaica*.

of God's plan.²³⁹ It was for this reason that the issue of Zionism was largely ignored at the first gathering of the WUPJ in 1926. They did not want to create a rift between the American contingency right from the beginning.²⁴⁰ There were also political issues involved. Many Reform leaders feared their loyalty would be called into question if they associated with Zionism. Indeed these fears were substantiated by political rhetoric and commentary. Already in 1907, Rauch wrote to the editor of the newspaper in Sioux City, Iowa, defending the Jewish community against the rants of Madam Pevsner, a traveling lecturer who came to town accusing the American Jew of not "truly loving his country" in light of Zionism.²⁴¹ Rauch wrote an extensive essay in 1918 entitled, "*The Dangers of Zionism*" in which he stated clearly that he believed Zionism to be a threat to the successful Jewish way of life in the United States. Rauch's stance on the matter of Zionism remained constant at least until the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, if not for the entirety of his life.²⁴²

Since there was no consensus among the Reform rabbinate on the matter of Zionism, the CCAR, in 1935, passed a resolution stating that they would not take a stand either way on Zionism. Then in 1942, the CCAR passed a pro-Zionism statement calling for a Jewish army in Palestine. As a result, those in the CCAR who opposed Zionism called for a meeting in 1942 of the non-Zionist CCAR rabbis. On May 27, 1942, Rauch signed a statement agreeing to attend the scheduled meeting in Atlantic City in June of

²³⁹Rufus Lears, *The Jews in America: A History* (Cleveland: World Publishing Co. 1954), 178.

²⁴⁰Michael Scott Datz, *Poor Cousin or Parent Body?: The World Union of Progressive Judaism During its First 50 Years, 1926-1976*. HUC Rabbinic Thesis, 1987. Page 24.

²⁴¹The letter to the editor is dated April 18, 1907.

²⁴²It seems odd that Rauch never changed his opinion on this matter because of his close association with Justice Louis Brandeis, who became the face of American Zionism. Rauch was close with the Brandeis family as can be substantiated through extant correspondence. Yet this association and friendship never assuaged Rauch's fear that Zionism was a threat to American Jewish life. For a discussion of views on Zionism in the Reform movement see, David Polish, *Renew our Days* (Jerusalem: The Zionist Organization: 1976).

1942.²⁴³ Subsequently, Rauch signed onto the "statement of principles by Non-Zionist rabbis" agreed to in June and the American Council for Judaism was established in August. The statement shows support for Palestine in the Jewish soul, and "rehabilitation" of it and that the signatories "stand ready to render unstinted aid [but] are unable to subscribe to or support the political emphasis now paramount in the Zionist program."²⁴⁴ This group of non-Zionist rabbis called themselves the American Council for Judaism.²⁴⁵

At the 1943 CCAAR meeting, a committee, composed of Rabbis Solomon B. Freehoff, Barnett Brickner, Samuel Goldenson, Jacob R. Marcus, Julian Morgenstern, Joseph Rauch, and Stephen S. Wise, was asked to prepare resolution(s) dealing with the issue of Zionism to be presented to the Conference. The first resolution stated "The Conference declares that it discerns no essential incompatibility between Reform Judaism and Zionism, no reason why those of its members who give allegiance to Zionism should not have the right to regard themselves as fully within the spirit and purpose of Reform Judaism." This resolution passed and a second resolution was offered, which called into question the existence of the American Council for Judaism claiming that it would ultimately divide the CCAAR and "tarnish" the movement in the eyes of the wider Jewish community. "Therefore, without impugning the right of Zionists or non-Zionists to express and to disseminate their convictions within and without the Conference, we, in the spirit of amity, urge our colleagues of the American Council for Judaism to terminate this organization."

²⁴³The meeting took place in Atlantic City on June 1, 1942.

²⁴⁴The statement can be found in the American Jewish Archives in the papers of the American Council for Judaism, MSS Col. #17, Box 2, folder 1.

²⁴⁵See Thomas A. Kolsky, *Jews Against Zionism: the American Council for Judaism, 1942-1948* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press. 1990) and <http://www.acjna.org>.

A lengthy minority report on Resolution II was co-authored, and presented, by Samuel H. Goldenson and Joseph Rauch. The report stated that it was beyond the scope of the Conference to ask for the disbandment of the American Council for Judaism. It also stated that such a request ran contrary to the rights of free speech as protected in the U.S. Bill of Rights. It restated the reason for the council's existence, namely:

The occasion for the organization was the recognition of the meaning of incidents and tendencies within the Conference and episodes outside which clearly indicated to them the necessity to make known their own views and convictions about their concern for Jews and Judaism. That the American Council was organized by Rabbis was due to the fact that a sharp distinction was felt between those who took the Nationalist approach to Jewish life and the others who took the non-Nationalist view.

The motion to adopt the minority report was lost, and the majority report was called and accepted by 137-45.²⁴⁶ This, however, did not mark the end of the American Council for Judaism. But, by 1946, Rauch could no longer be found on the council's membership list.²⁴⁷

Another area in which Rauch was very active nationally, was on behalf of children and youth. Specifically, he was involved in education. While his primary focus was on Jewish children and their educational development, he did serve as a member of the Mid-Century White House Conference on Children and Youth. He was responsible for creating a report for Kentucky on the topic of religion for the conference at the White House.

²⁴⁶The entire presentation of resolutions and their discussion is contained in the CCAR Yearbook, Volume LIII.

²⁴⁷After the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, Rauch apparently publicly announced from the pulpit that he was withdrawing from the American Council For Judaism. At that time, Rauch is remembered as saying that he was proud to identify with the Jewish State even though he disagreed with its ideological basis. Lewis Cole. Interview by David Locketz, January 2004.

The purpose of the conference was "to consider how we can develop in children the mental, emotional and spiritual qualities essential to individual happiness and responsible citizenship, and what economical and social conditions are deemed necessary to this development." Rauch dissected the stated purpose of the conference into a three-fold approach suggesting mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects for emphasis. Rauch's report suggested what could be done via the influence of religion in these areas.

All three major religions in Kentucky (Catholicism, Protestantism, and Judaism) approached it differently, but they shared:

unanimity in the conviction that children and youth must have some knowledge of the religion into which they were born. It may be said categorically that wherever there has been a church, a parish, a mission, or a synagogue, there religion has tried to be of service to children and youth. These did not meet all the spiritual needs of children but they invariably attempted to give them some religious instructions, some moral precepts, some ethical guidance. In areas where the State was indifferent or neglectful, all that children and young people acquired for their spiritual life they received from church and synagogue.

It is interesting to note that after more than 20 years since serving as chairperson to the CCAR Committee on Church and State, Rauch's stance seems to have softened. Perhaps he believed that the values he hoped would be provided for in society by religious institutions alone were being neglected.

Rauch stated that Judaism had been the most different because of the small numbers of Jews in Kentucky.²⁴⁸ Thus Judaism had not had the need for the large institutions and programs that the other religions required.²⁴⁹ Rauch strongly advocated the work of the religious groups in any program for youth.

²⁴⁸He stated that there were about 25,000 Jews in Kentucky at that time.

²⁴⁹"Where there have been large numbers of Jews, the community has followed the pattern of the general community, i.e. congregations, religious schools, various societies for young people, athletic

The churches and synagogues are in advance of the community at large in interest, in solicitude and in planning for children and youth. They endeavor to minister to them in ways calculated to develop the best of which they are capable...they are usually on the side of progress and constitute a moral force spurring city fathers to do their full duty to children and youth. In this work the religious forces are not swayed by politics but by what will advance the best interests of the young people. The very presence of a religious institution in a community is already a protecting agency for children and a moral influence among young people.

Rauch reported to the conference that the youth of the country needed to be involved with the religion of their upbringing. "These are days when we are trying to safeguard much that we regard as sacred and precious and free. Probably the best way of doing this is to serve children and youth and that will persuade them to hold onto the spiritual forces of their respective religions."²⁵⁰

Regardless of his affiliations with other projects, Rauch was a rabbi and as such, his primary concern was that of Jewish education. He gave two important lectures²⁵¹ that have been published in this regard. The first, given before the Jewish Chautauqua Society in 1920,²⁵² was entitled, "*God: The Starting Point and Goal in Religious Studies.*" The thesis of the lecture dealt with the importance of teaching Jewish Ethics in religious school, not merely Jewish history.²⁵³

There is a danger in separating ethics from religion in connection with Sunday School work. Biblical Judaism does not know ethics apart from religion...I think for all practical purposes we shall give a better

groups etc. Louisville has an YMHA and vocational guidance bureau, a vacation camp school and two Boy Scout troupes."

²⁵⁰The report can be found in the American Jewish Archives, MSS COL#91, box 11, folders 7 and 9.

²⁵¹These are lectures and sermons and could be included in the chapter on such lectures and sermons, but the author felt their inclusion here was more appropriate.

²⁵²This paper was read before the Jewish Chautauqua Society, Cleveland, Ohio, 12-28-1920.

²⁵³Rauch substantiated this claim by stating, "One need but turn at random to any chapter in the Bible to convince himself that every event narrated there, every law proclaimed, every festival ordained, every commandment given has a purpose beyond and above what is generally termed history. In nearly every instance both the expressed and implied object is to make man conscious of God Almighty and to encourage him to model his conduct according to divine standards."

presentation of our faith in our religious schools if ethics, morality, piety and spirituality are regarded as indivisible parts of Judaism. Judaism is already sufficiently mutilated without additional vivisection.²⁵⁴

Rauch implored those present to work harder at teaching Judaism and its ways, "For, if the purpose of our Sabbath schools be to make the pupils aware of God and teach them to walk in His ways, then they are utterly useless." The theology of the individual teacher did not matter to Rauch. "I am not asking a single teacher to do violence to his conscience...once we are convinced that the Bible is religiously and morally true it will not matter much whether it will stand the test of historical accuracy or scientific exactness." His ultimate goal was to teach Jewish feelings, and a Jewish love of God. "If we but feel before we begin our work in the class room that our important task is not so much to teach the history of this people's religious striving after the knowledge of God and the way in which God made himself known through the ages, then I think we would realize that the Bible is not primarily a record of man's thoughts about God, but a record of what God has done and made known of himself to man."²⁵⁵

Rauch desired that teachers would implant a holy connection within each child. "Here we get a glimpse of the Divine spark which must be kept aglow if Jewish schools of religion will even become Jewish religious schools, sending forth Jewish boys and girls with reverence for and loyalty to the sacred things in life."²⁵⁶ This was one of Rauch's ultimate goals.

²⁵⁴ *God: The Starting Point and Goal in Religious Studies* was delivered before the Jewish Chautauqua Society on 12-28-1920 in Cleveland, Ohio.

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

²⁵⁶ Ibid.

Rauch's reason for making education such an important emphasis in his rabbinate was stated in a second important lecture he gave on the topic.²⁵⁷ In 1933, Rauch addressed the "Symposium on Religion Tomorrow" at the 33rd Council of the UAHC.²⁵⁸ In this lecture, Rauch asserted that every living thing in the world merely lived to perpetuate itself. He differentiated humans from the rest of the living world saying, "it [religion] aims to give life a purpose and to justify it on ground higher than instinct." Jewish education accomplished this. "We made the task of teaching compulsory thousands of years before modern civilization enacted its first compulsory law of education." The education he referenced was that of Torah. "It shows our leaders looked to religious education as the sole guarantee of our survival. The object of Jewish Education was Judaism." Rauch was so committed to the furthering of Judaism via the religious education system of the day because he believed it to be the sole guarantor of a Jewish future.

One of Rauch's highest ideals was that of fellowship. He preached fellowship as the foundation of almost every cause for which he was passionate. It makes sense then, that in his personal life, he sought ways to foster fellowship for himself among likeminded souls. Beginning in 1917, Rauch was an active member of the Rotary Club. At one point in his life, he sat on the international governing body of that organization. It became a Louisville tradition during the 1930s for Rauch to address the Rotarians on Thanksgiving Day.²⁵⁹

²⁵⁷The Lecture was called, "*What Part is Jewish Education Destined to Play In Our Survival?*"

²⁵⁸This Symposium took place in June, 1933, in Chicago.

²⁵⁹For more information about the Rotary Club, see footnote 4. These addresses, mentioned above, are extant and will be addressed in a subsequent chapter.

Another organization to which Rauch was loyal was the Freemasons.

Freemasonry was a secret society, so while it is clear that Rauch was active throughout his life, very little is known about his specific participation.²⁶⁰ What is known is that Rauch was conferred Master of the Royal Secret of the 32nd Degree of the Ancient and accepted Scottish Rite in Sioux City, Iowa. This degree was achieved in 1907 and was issued by T.S. Parvin Consistory Number 5.²⁶¹ According to the archives of the Tyrian lodge, Rauch was examined for his proficiency of the third degree of masonry on December 19, 1907. According to the records of the Scottish Rite body and the Abu Bekr Shrine, he took the degrees in consistory and shrine both in 1908. He was demitted²⁶² from the Tyrian lodge on February 10, 1916. When he moved to Louisville, he joined the St. George Lodge, No. 239. The only extant public mention of Rauch's association with the Freemasons was in a brochure that lists him as giving remarks to Louisville Lodge, No 14. Rauch ultimately achieved the 32nd degree in the Scottish Rite.²⁶³

This chapter attempted to present the organizations in which Rauch participated and the values that emanated from that participation. Rauch, at least until the 1950s, believed wholeheartedly that religion did not belong in the public sector. It had no place in government and certainly had no place in the public schools where children were influenced. He believed it was one of the rabbis' responsibilities to be a community

²⁶⁰ Rauch never wrote about his experiences with the Freemasons, although he did give three lectures to groups of Freemasons on various Masonic values. What is known has been gleaned from scant records in the archive of his lodge in Sioux City, Iowa called the Tyrian Lodge. Only two mentions of his name were found in the records of the Scottish Rite Body and in the Abu Bekr Shrine archives.

²⁶¹ In Sioux City, Iowa.

²⁶² The word "demitted" refers to the process by which a Freemason resigns from a particular lodge. When a Freemason leaves a lodge, he is "demitted" and receives a certificate called a "dimit" which makes resignation official. The certificate contains the lodge's official seal and is testimony to the resignation.

²⁶³ All of his degrees are located in American Jewish Archives, flat file.

watchdog for church-state separation. Religious leaders, because of their training, were especially prepared to recognize the nuances of religious sectarianism that might not be obvious to others. It was therefore necessary for the CCAR to act to protect the Jewish community from such intrusions.

Rauch was unafraid to go against accepted practice either religiously or politically if he believed his path was the moral one. The quality of his character that gave him strength to combat issues of church-state separation also motivated him to fight for what he believed in through the organizations to which he belonged. Rauch was an advocate of officiating at intermarriages when it was not the common practice. He wholeheartedly opposed political Zionism long after most Reform rabbis had changed their opinion on the matter. Rauch embodied the idea of religious adaptation and the need to understand each and every decision made in one's life within the context of the world. He took very little for granted.

Rauch's lifelong mission to teach the core religious values of Judaism to everyone he could reach drove him through each day of his rabbinate. Those values that led to the most moral way of living were his goal and his guide. His organizational participation reflected that mission. Everything that he did was an attempt to accomplish the manifestation of Jewish values in the world. As this chapter illustrated these themes via Rauch's actions, the final chapter expands upon these same themes via his words in an analysis of his lectures, essays and sermons.

Chapter Four

The purpose of this chapter is to broaden the characterization heretofore established of Joseph Rauch through an examination of his own words. More than 1200 of the sermons he wrote are extant.²⁶⁴ In addition to these, there are many radio addresses, lectures, and papers available. By examining a range of topics on which he wrote throughout his rabbinate, one can understand clearly what was important, religiously, to Rauch as a preacher and religious leader. He preached on hundreds of topics, yet under close scrutiny, it becomes clear that his convictions on most topics remained consistent throughout his life. He rarely changed his view on matters he believed to be central to the Reform movement and to the modern liberal Jew. Even on controversial issues such as Zionism, (which Rauch opposed as noted in the previous chapter), a notion that began as radical political ideology and developed into a mass movement during Rauch's lifetime, his beliefs did not waiver. By way of analysis, this chapter looks at several areas that Rauch addressed regularly throughout his preaching, lecturing, and scholarship. The sources include a series of lectures he delivered to students at HUC on the topic of practical rabbinic issues, scholarly articles he wrote about liturgy, Torah, and education, sermons on Judaism as it intersected with the everyday life of the congregation, theology, and Zionism. Rauch is not remembered as a commanding speaker in his sermon delivery, but because of the level of respect with which he was held, he was able to deliver each message from his heart to a congregation

²⁶⁴The majority of these sermons are held in the American Jewish Archives. Typed manuscripts are organized alphabetically. In addition to the typed sermons, 19 volumes of handwritten sermons are also held in the collection. Several hundred sermons, some typed and some handwritten in ledgers, are held in the Frances Shapiro-Weitzenhoffer Archives on the campus of Congregation Adath Israel Brith Shalom in Louisville, Kentucky.

ready to listen.²⁶⁵ Rauch, known for his lengthy discourse, is remembered for his academic treatment of relevant Jewish topics.²⁶⁶

The first category of sermons and lectures that are indicative of Rauch's personal credo and philosophy deal with how he viewed his responsibilities as a rabbi. Throughout the earlier chapters of this thesis, much has been said about Rauch's rabbinate from analysis of his actions and from intermittent comments he made in reference to specific activities in which he participated. Yet, speaking through his sermons in the first person, Rauch recorded much about how he perceived his role as rabbi. The first was a sermon he delivered on the first Shabbat at his new congregation in Iowa upon ordination.²⁶⁷ In this sermon, Rauch spoke extensively on two issues that would become akin to his identity as rabbi. The first concerned social justice. Rauch from the beginning was a community activist. The prophetic ideals of Judaism were dear to him and he made it clear that his mission was the well-being of the community as a whole. Like the prophets of old, he claimed that it was the responsibility of the modern day rabbi to make it known when there were people oppressed. "It is the minister whose proud but difficult task it is to battle for justice and righteousness, for love and truth, in spite of the sneers and jeers with which he is often rewarded for his task."²⁶⁸ Rauch was very sensitive to suffering whether locally, nationally, or abroad. He understood the purpose of Torah in the world as a tool to fight suffering. Therefore the rabbi had to risk much in making sure the congregation understood that they too had to take responsibility

²⁶⁵ Jim Hertzman, Lewis Cole. Interviews by David Locketz, January 2004.

²⁶⁶ Sylvia Waller. Interview by David Locketz, January 23, 2004.

²⁶⁷ Joseph Rauch, *Inaugural Address* (Mt. Sinai in Sioux City, Iowa: October 29, 1905).

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

for the downtrodden. This may not have been a popular position for the rabbi to take, but as a conduit of Torah, Rauch believed it was an absolute rabbinic requirement.

Just as Rauch did not relent on his responsibility to champion the needs of the less fortunate, all the more so, he championed the spiritual needs of his congregation. To Rauch, a member of the congregation who ignored his/her need for worship lacked a vital necessity. Rauch placed great responsibility on congregants for attendance at worship services. This is a value he would repeatedly emphasize for the next 52 years. "It is your presence in temple which elevates you spiritually and which enables our hearts and purifies our thoughts more than all the reading and studying about ethics and morality will ever do for us, and it is also your presence in the house of God which encourages your minister to serve his congregation in the very best of his ability."²⁶⁹ Rauch's sense of success in the rabbinate came from the participation of the congregation in worship services. When the pews were empty, he felt he had failed.

Seven years later, in Rauch's final sermon in Iowa,²⁷⁰ he spoke about the experiences necessary to become a successful rabbi. He thanked the congregation for hiring him right out of the seminary. Looking back, he realized how little he knew as a newly ordained rabbi. He again returned to the two initial points of his inaugural sermon. He asked forgiveness if he had offended anyone by standing up for what he believed. "My conscience has always come first, so if I have offended anyone...it was in the line of duty."²⁷¹ As he initially stated, the rabbi must stand up for ideals that others do not, or

²⁶⁹Joseph Rauch, *Inaugural Address* (Mt. Sinai in Sioux City, Iowa: October 29, 1905).

²⁷⁰Joseph Rauch, *Farewell Address* (Sioux Falls, Iowa: No Date). This was Rauch's final sermon as the rabbi of Mt. Sinai, but he did return for their 50th Anniversary as a guest speaker.

²⁷¹Rauch also proudly claimed success in making the city a better place, furthering his stance that the rabbi has a responsibility to the whole spectrum of communal participation. "This pulpit took a prominent part in the work to help make this city cleaner, healthier, and better."

will not. Rauch also emphasized how deeply he valued congregational attendance at worship services, but this time it was on behalf of the new rabbi saying, "Just think of the slump you would take if only for a week your offices and stores would see no one but a handful of faithful workers plus a few stragglers." In the end, Rauch felt that the congregation had grown with him too. "Happy, indeed, shall I be if in the new field of my endeavor Adath Israel of Louisville will be with me in spirit as was Mt. Sinai of this city."

Eight years later in Louisville, on the occasion of Congregation Brith Sholom's²⁷² celebration of 25 years of service from their rabbi, Dr. Ignatius Mueller,²⁷³ Rauch spoke of what to him was the ideal rabbi.²⁷⁴ He used Dr. Mueller as his example. Rauch spoke of a rabbi who was a scholar in "rabbiness." Rauch described a natural ability to serve as a rabbi to the community. To him, Mueller was an "immovable rock amidst the ebb and flow of passing fancy and fleeting fad." Mueller was a "practicing as well as a preaching rabbi." To Rauch this meant someone who was a scholar in all areas of Jewish knowledge, and could teach this knowledge to his congregation.²⁷⁵ Finally, quoting from Proverbs,²⁷⁶ he described Mueller as being of "clean hands and pure heart," because of the way he led by example with an "exemplary home life."²⁷⁷ To Rauch, good rabbis were steadfast in their beliefs and not only had the ability to teach them to others, but

²⁷²The Reform Congregation in Louisville with which Adath Israel would eventual merge.

²⁷³Ignatius Mueller was born on June 10, 1857, in Eperies, Hungary, and he died in Atlantic City, New Jersey, on September 7, 1925. He earned a Ph.D. from the University of Berlin and was ordained from HUC in Cincinnati. He served three congregations during his rabbinate. They were in Des Moines, Iowa; Kalamazoo, Michigan; and finally in Louisville, Kentucky.

²⁷⁴Joseph Rauch, *The Rabbi as Viewed by the Rabbi* (January 6, 1920).

²⁷⁵Rauch described these areas of Jewish knowledge as "Bible, Mishnah, Talmud and all the literature from the Middle Ages."

²⁷⁶The manuscript states the sermon is based on Proverbs Chapter 3, but this does not appear to be the correct citation.

²⁷⁷Joseph Rauch, *The Rabbi as Viewed by the Rabbi* (Delivered January 6, 1920).

emphasized them by living those ideals in everyday life. A rabbi was a scholar in all things Jewish from sacred legal and moral texts to the embodiment of Jewish teaching.

In the Rauch Papers there exists a series of sermons, without dates, which systematically describe different areas of the rabbinic world.²⁷⁸ In one sermon, Rauch described the pastoral work incumbent on a good rabbi.²⁷⁹ He noted, with concern, that the younger generation of rabbis "frowns upon pastoral work."²⁸⁰ To Rauch, pastoral work was very important. Using the renowned Dr. Henry Cohen²⁸¹ of Galveston as his example, he stated that, "My own belief is that pastoral work gives the rabbi an opportunity to know his people and to draw them to him, to make them feel that he is interested in them and that he's ready and willing to aid them in every way he can." Rauch believed that rabbis should prove they are their congregants' friends. "Pastoral attention is the best way I know to make them realize that we are their friend and not only their official rabbi. I believe that congregations have the right to this personal attention from the rabbi and that the latter should be glad and willing to give it." Finally, he called upon his listeners to visit the sick, call on the aged, to visit institutions and to make themselves available for "special family events."²⁸² He ended by extolling pastoral care.

²⁷⁸The writer believes, because of the writing style and reference to experiences, that Rauch wrote these lectures in the early 1920s and that he delivered them either to a gathering of the CCAR or to a group of students at HUC.

²⁷⁹Joseph Rauch, *The Pastoral Work of the Rabbi* (No Date).

²⁸⁰Ibid.

²⁸¹Henry Cohen was born in London on April 7, 1863 and died in Houston, Texas on June 12, 1952. He was ordained at Jew's College in London. He served as rabbi in Kingston, Jamaica (1885-88), then at B'nai Israel in Galveston, Texas. Cohen is noted for his relief efforts after the Houston hurricane of 1900. He also was a central figure in the 1907 "Galveston Plan" which diverted 10,000 Eastern European Jews from New England into the central part of the country where their labor was needed. He headed the Jewish Immigrants' Information Bureau from 1907-1914. He was also deeply involved in lobbying for prison reform in Texas. He campaigned for better treatment of prisoners and for rehabilitation of ex-convicts. See A. Cohen et al., *Man Who Stayed in Texas* (1941); and A. Dreyfus (ed.), *Henry Cohen, Messenger of the Lord* (1963).

²⁸²Joseph Rauch, *The Pastoral Work of the Rabbi* (No Date).

"Let me say that anything that properly strengthens the bonds between the congregation and the rabbi is not to be highly dismissed."

In another sermon from this series,²⁸³ delivered to what appears to have been a roundtable discussion on the role of the rabbi, Rauch lamented that the old ways of being a rabbi, in which the rabbi was secluded in study, are gone and that the new role for the rabbi is a very public one. He even suggested that, as far as the rabbi is concerned, "The more he is in demand outside his congregation the stronger becomes his position in the Temple."²⁸⁴ Rauch understood that the Jewish community was trying to live in the same way as every other group accepted in American society. He understood this,²⁸⁵ but also sought to elevate the scholarly side of the rabbinic role. "Our prime duty is teaching and preaching Judaism, studying our literature, keeping our congregations informed of what is going on in the Jewish world at large and holding our people to everything that quickens the Jewish conscience and holds the Jewish people religiously intact." Rauch feared that without a firm emphasis on matters of the spirit, rabbis would cease to fulfill the religious leadership role they were trained to assume.²⁸⁶

²⁸³ Joseph Rauch, *The Rabbi and the General Community* (No Date).

²⁸⁴ Ibid.

²⁸⁵ Ibid. "The rabbi who figured prominently in the life and work of the community was regarded as the able and successful rabbi. His standing and worth in his congregation was determined in no small measure by the regard in which he was held by non-Jews. His position was not jeopardized by his limitations in the field in which he was theoretically supposed to be expert and authority, but if he was not abreast in the civic affairs of the community, if he was not prominent on its programs, if he was not a man sought and desirable in leading non-Jewish communal groups he fell in the estimation of his own members... The vast majority of our congregations are consciously and energetically pursuing the policy of being one with the community in everything except religion. In this our congregations are following the preachments of Reform Judaism. The rabbis of American Reform Judaism have proclaimed this desideratum with much emphasis for over a half-century."

²⁸⁶ Ibid. "As things are, the office of the rabbi is in danger of becoming a sort of congregational executive director and Jewish spokesman for everything under the sun."

In a lecture²⁸⁷ that appears to have been given at some point between World War I and the Great Depression, Rauch outlined his notion of the role a rabbi should play in philanthropy. He regretted having put himself in the position of collecting money from those who pledged it because he believed it would be difficult to reverse his role, but suggested that rabbis must give generously. He claimed that since the congregation knew their rabbi's salary and the rabbi's basic expenses, a rabbi must indeed give generously in order to lead by example.²⁸⁸ He went as far as to suggest that no rabbi had the right to preach on a cause that he did not support financially. He also demanded that there should be a rabbi on the board of every Jewish philanthropic organization in a city. Rauch also asserted that rabbis could best help individuals in need by sending them to the various Jewish agencies for help before giving monies directly to them. Finally, he argued that a rabbi ought to give generously to non-sectarian causes too. Integrity was central to how Rauch viewed modern rabbis. A rabbi could not teach one thing and then do another. Philanthropy was another area in which Rauch implored rabbis to practice that which they taught.

A final lecture that Rauch wrote on the rabbinic profession dealt with the "pulpit."²⁸⁹ Knowing that his own job had been secured in Louisville based largely on his ability to preach well, he taught that, "Today the most sought qualities in the rabbi are preaching and eloquence."²⁹⁰ Whether, as rabbis, they appreciated it or not, this was

²⁸⁷ Joseph Rauch, *Philanthropic Work of the Rabbi* (No Date).

²⁸⁸ Ibid. "It is obvious that our ears, our hearts, our purses must be open to every legitimate need of our people. We can ill afford to teach and preach charity, generosity, and helpfulness without following it up with the concrete example. Members in our congregations may refuse to help without loss of respect and prestige, but not the rabbi. Congregations know our income, our mode of living, our preachments. So they expect of us to set the example even if they are not willing to follow it. I would say we have no moral right to speak in behalf of any cause without supporting it with money."

²⁸⁹ Joseph Rauch, *The Pulpit Work of the Rabbi* (No Date).

²⁹⁰ Ibid.

what was expected of them by the congregations who employed them.²⁹¹ Rauch felt that the most difficult aspect of preaching was finding topics on which to preach for two sermons each week. He then described the process by which he found sermonic subjects. During the first years of his rabbinate, Rauch took note of each question that was asked of him. He spent a great deal of time on his titles believing that people were more likely to come for services if the sermon topic sounded enticing. He investigated what people wanted to know and added what he personally felt they should know.

During his early years in the rabbinate, Rauch based his sermons on a biblical text, following the example of Siegmund Maybaum.²⁹² He told those listening that "Maybaum was my homiletical *vade mecum*."²⁹³ But he realized:

The difficulty with these sermonic efforts of mine during the first two or three years was that after I wrote them I realized they were far removed from the life in which the congregation and I moved. They may have had some homiletical value but they lacked appeal for the continuation of the Jewish life along religious, cultural, social, philanthropic lines of which the congregation and I were a part.²⁹⁴

It was based on these early experiences that Rauch realized that his task in the pulpit was to convince his congregation that there was value in remaining Jewish. "Jewish courage, or rather courage to remain Jewish is the thing that is needed and much of my pulpit effort was devoted to this. Jewish unity and mutual responsibility was another thing that

²⁹¹Joseph Rauch, *The Pulpit Work of the Rabbi* (No Date). "We in the profession may have other ideals for the rabbi, but we cannot forget that it is the congregation that has the pulpit to give and whether we will it, or not, we are compelled to give to our pulpit work the first consideration."

²⁹²Siegmund Maybaum was a rabbi in Berlin. He studied at the Lyceum in Pressburg at the University of Breslau, and later at the Theological Seminary of Breslau. From 1870 to 1873 he was rabbi at Alsó-Kubin, Hungary; from 1873 to 1881, at Saaz, Bohemia; and from 1881 a rabbi in Berlin where he was also docent at the Lehranstalt für die Wissenschaft des Judentums. He convened the first congress of German rabbis in Berlin in 1884 and was considered a very eloquent speaker.

²⁹³Joseph Rauch, *The Pulpit Work of the Rabbi* (No Date).

²⁹⁴*Ibid.*

I stressed.²⁹⁵ Rauch wished to speak on theology in those days, but believed that no one in his congregation had significant issues with their theology.²⁹⁶ He also used the pulpit to respond to polemics even though this was not his preference. Rauch noted that rabbis of the current time had the added responsibility of providing Jewish adult education from the pulpit. Finally, Rauch recommended his mode of sermon writing, which included writing out the full text, revising it, and then delivering it without a manuscript. He also stressed that the rabbi needed to be cognizant of who comprised the congregation.²⁹⁷ In other words, Rauch believed it was important to address a sermon to the specific congregation. One needed to tailor their words to suit those present.

Another significant source of information about Rauch is found in his scholarly writings. Very early in his rabbinate, Rauch began to express himself in lectures and papers presented beyond the scope of his synagogue work. Examples of these have already been noted in earlier chapters.²⁹⁸ Additionally, Rauch's dissertation was later adapted for publication.²⁹⁹ His scholarly contributions extended into encyclopedia work as well. Rauch³⁰⁰ authored both the entries on Kentucky and Louisville found in *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*. But by far, the most lasting scholarly works that Rauch wrote were those papers he presented to the CCAR.

²⁹⁵ Joseph Rauch, *The Pulpit Work of the Rabbi* (No Date).

²⁹⁶ As the tragedies of the twentieth century unfolded, Rauch would speak with great frequency on the topic of theology.

²⁹⁷ Joseph Rauch, *The Pulpit Work of the Rabbi* (No Date). He specifically cited that those present might consist of "Traditionalists, Conservative, Reform, Skeptics, Ethicists, and Non-Jews."

²⁹⁸ Joseph Rauch, *God the Starting Point and Goal in Religious Instruction* (presented before the Jewish Chautauqua Society: December 28, 1920). This paper was reprinted in the HUC Monthly in March 1921. See chapter three for discussion; and Joseph Rauch, "What Part is Jewish Education Destined to Play in Our Survival" (delivered before the UAHC Symposium on Education in Chicago, 1933). See Chapter three.

²⁹⁹ Joseph Rauch, "Apocalypse in the Bible," *Journal of Jewish Lore and Philosophy* 1 (April 1919): 163.

³⁰⁰ As noted in chapter one.

The first paper Rauch delivered before the CCAR was called "The Hamburg Prayer-book."³⁰¹ Rauch authored this paper in 1918, the same year that the CCAR revised the Union Prayer-book.³⁰² In this presentation, Rauch emphasized the theological importance of modernizing religion. He believed that the Hamburg Temple served as a cornerstone on which Reform Judaism was built. In his exposition of the Hamburg Prayer-book, Rauch first gave a historical analysis of how Reform Judaism came into being.³⁰³ "The prayer-book of the Hamburg Temple," Rauch wrote, was "the work of M.I. Bresselau and S.J. Frankel and is a perfect portrayal of the aims, limitations, and inconsistencies in early Reform."³⁰⁴ He praised the creators of the book for being willingly inconsistent in order to attempt to bring Judaism into the current times. Rauch claimed that what they accomplished was nothing short of a break from orthodoxy.³⁰⁵ They liberated the Jews of their time. "Vastly more important and fundamental than the introduction of the vernacular and music were the modifications which the reformers introduced in some of the prayers, the entire omission of others and the addition of such

³⁰¹ Joseph Rauch, *The Hamburg Prayer-book* (Cincinnati: *CCAR Yearbook XXVIII*), 253.

³⁰² The Union Prayer-Book was originally published by the CCAR in 1895.

³⁰³ Joseph Rauch, *The Hamburg Prayer-book* (Cincinnati: *CCAR Yearbook, XXVIII*), 253. "The temple was patterned after the attempts of Beer in Berlin and Jacobson in Seesen. Decorum, brevity in the service, the introduction of the vernacular, a sermon and choir were to make the service more interesting, devotional and intelligent to the worshipper, while the elimination of prayers asking for a restoration to Palestine and a reintroduction of the sacrificial rites were to remove the theological and dogmatic elements in the way of the Jew becoming an integral part of the population in the countries in which he lived. These were the aims of the early reformers in general and those of Hamburg in particular. It is the distinction of the Hamburg temple to have attempted to give public expression to these new hopes and views through the newly organized temple and the revised prayer-book."

³⁰⁴ Ibid.

³⁰⁵ Ibid. Concerning the orthodox, "They might have tolerated some modifications, but to see in the new prayer-book a conscious and vigorous attempt to free Judaism from the Galuth and Shulhan Aruch viewpoints, to see a systematic though not always consistent effort to proclaim through public service the doctrine that the Jew no longer looked to a return to Palestine as the goal of his history but that he attempted to work out his destiny in the lands where he lived, was something which they could scarcely comprehend as forming part of the religious service of Jews, it was made the more incomprehensible to them when all this was done with the avowed aim to deepen loyalty to Judaism and strengthen Israel's solidarity."

as expressed for the new liberal religious needs of their day. It is here that an open break was made with orthodoxy.”³⁰⁶

Rauch noted that the Hamburg Temple prayer-book had been written by laypeople and therefore had its imperfections. “It is far from being a masterpiece.”³⁰⁷ But it represented an important beginning for Reform Judaism and its aims were still being pursued by Rauch and his colleagues. As he explained, “we, who combine in our efforts loyalty to Judaism, allegiance to the land of our birth or adoption and union with universal Israel, are the living proofs that the hopes of the Hamburg reformers, the broad principles which they voiced in their prayers have, with God's help and America's freedom, become realities.”³⁰⁸

Rauch delivered a second significant paper to the CCAR in 1935. It was simply entitled “Torah.”³⁰⁹ This paper reads as if Rauch intended it to be an historical analysis of the Torah. As in his other writings that deal largely with Reform Judaism, Rauch stressed that Reform Judaism never meant to break from the rest of the Jewish world. Rauch argued that Reform Judaism's organizational objective was to reunite the Jewish world under a modern umbrella of understanding that allowed men to be both religiously Jewish and of the modern world at the same time. In this way, this lecture serves as a sequel to the “Hamburg Prayer-book” lecture mentioned above.

Rauch credited Reform Judaism for bringing an understanding of the Torah into the world that allowed it to influence life in a real way. Although he never negated the

³⁰⁶ Joseph Rauch, *The Hamburg Prayer-book* (Cincinnati: CCAR Yearbook, XXVIII), 253.

³⁰⁷ Ibid.

³⁰⁸ Ibid.

³⁰⁹ Joseph Rauch, *Torah* (Cincinnati: CCAR Yearbook, XLV), 246. The original draft has a subtitle, *Evaluation of Reform Judaism*. Dr. Samuel Cohon, in a letter dated March 28, 1935 offered Rauch suggestions on how to structure the paper as well as a complete bibliography for guidance.

importance of the historical understanding of Torah,³¹⁰ he nevertheless believed that the academic and scientific study of Torah made its text more religiously accessible to modern, liberal Jews, allowing for its moral and ethical teachings to overshadow the parts of it that were incompatible with modern life: "It was with the advent of Reform Judaism that the authorship, validity and consequently the theology of Torah came under serious, comprehensive and critical study and resulted in a definite departure from tradition."³¹¹ It was this departure, Rauch insisted, that allowed for a new understanding of the Torah's religious significance.

But, just as the omission of some prayers and modification of others in the Hamburg Prayer-book represented a major break from Orthodoxy, so did this engender a new understanding of Torah. For Rauch this meant that some things in the Torah simply no longer had meaning for Reform Jews. "The most radical and decisive position that Reform Judaism took was in declaring in Torah, in Mosaism, were institutions that were ephemeral, that had been completely outgrown, that they would not come back and should not come back no matter what turn Israel's history might take. Sabbatical year, tithes, Jubilee, the sacrificial cult, priestly and Levitical casts were among these."³¹²

Ultimately for Rauch, this understanding of Torah meant a different understanding of revelation. "I understand by revelation an awareness of the presence of God which makes every generation of Israel say, 'All the things that the Lord has

³¹⁰Joseph Rauch, *Torah* (Cincinnati: CCAR Yearbook, XLV), 246.. "In the crucial periods of our history, we invariably turned to a study of Torah. It was not always the same kind of searching investigation and the content as well as the interpretation of Torah differed from age to age but in one form or another it was Talmud Torah that came to the fore during great political upheavals and volcanic economic disturbances. A strange people indeed that did not go to its philosophers, its economic experts and its great political powers for ultimate light, help and salvation but to Torah."

³¹¹Ibid.

³¹²Ibid.

commanded, we will do!"³¹³ Out of it comes the consecrated resolve to pattern life in accordance with the knowledge and teachings that come from God, the urge to morality, to humility, to righteousness, to service, to purity."³¹⁴ For Rauch, Torah was the source of knowledge that brought Jewish people to that awareness.

Another genre of writing which comprised many sermons Rauch wrote deal with Judaism in general and Reform in particular. In these sermons, Rauch made known what he believed to be commonly held Reform principles with his constant plea to "maintain" whichever principle he held up at a given time. In his early writings, and to a certain extent later ones too, the ideology he presented to his congregation is very much in concert with the established Reform principles of each era. In the first twenty years of Rauch's rabbinate, he frequently made mention of the Pittsburgh Platform in reference to theological and practical issues pertaining to the practice of modern Judaism. Rauch consistently trumpeted the concept of the Mission of Israel and the prophetic ideals. Statements about Judaism such as, "[It is] not a creed religion in the general sense,"³¹⁵ and "Judaism is a religion of deeds not of beliefs"³¹⁶ are found throughout much of his writing. But Rauch's most consistent and oft-repeated definition of Judaism always came back to the meaning of history.³¹⁷ "Judaism is a development and a growth, ever

³¹³Exodus 24:3.

³¹⁴Joseph Rauch, *Torah* (Cincinnati: CCRAR Yearbook, XLV), 246.

³¹⁵Joseph Rauch, *A General Definition of Judaism* (No Date). But, the writer believes the sermon to have been written while Rauch was still in Iowa based on the paper used and the style of writing.

³¹⁶*Ibid.*

³¹⁷Joseph Rauch, *Our Purpose in History* (Cincinnati: March 21, 1921). This was a Founders' Day Address delivered at HUC in Cincinnati. "We have learned to regard the prophet as the embodiment of the very highest of our concepts of God, Israel and Judaism, and we can readily imagine how he would brush aside the husks and shells in order to get to the very heart of things...Here is where the genius of Israel asserted itself. In every generation it produced men who in one form or another taught that the historic purpose of our people was to understand and to know God, that everything was useful, necessary and, in a measure, sacred that led to this and from the religious angle nothing was essential that did not serve this purpose...Reform Judaism is a historic continuation of adapting ourselves to new needs brought about by new environments."

changing and yet fundamentally the same. It is, as it were, a mighty spiritual stream with its source in the heavenly heights of antiquity and ever flowing into the mighty ocean of eternity. It is as elusive and subtle as the current of the ocean and yet as real and mighty as the ocean itself."³¹⁸ For Rauch, the expression of Judaism was the perfect example of the evolutionary process. Over the years, he continually emphasized this to his congregation.

Frequently in Rauch's writing about Reform Judaism, he lamented, as stated above, that Reform was never supposed to be a separate religious movement from the orthodox. But the fact that it had become such in Rauch's lifetime, was undeniable. In acknowledging that there was more than one form of Judaism, Rauch rejected those who criticized Reform as a religion of convenience that provide people with an easier way to be Jewish.³¹⁹ He adamantly argued that Reform was created out of the desire to be religious, not out of a rejection of God or Judaism. "No atheist has ever cared to inaugurate religious reforms."³²⁰ For Rauch, the role model for the modernization of Judaism came from the French Revolutionaries. He referred to the Frenchman "as perhaps the first to realize clearly the impossibility of leading a dual life: on the one hand belief in the scientific discoveries of the day and on the other to look upon religion through the antiquated glasses of medievalism."³²¹ He saw the discrepancy and tried to harmonize his religious beliefs with his daily life, "In this founders of the Reform movement were by no means original they simply reverted to an old practice in

³¹⁸Joseph Rauch, *A General Definition of Judaism* (No Date).

³¹⁹Joseph Rauch, *Reform Judaism* (No Date). "They would have seen that the founders of the movement did not begin to study a plan of how to modify the existing religious beliefs until they saw that those in vogue were utterly meaningless to them not because they had ceased to be religious but because they wished to remain religious."

³²⁰Ibid.

³²¹Ibid.

Judaism."³²² Ultimately for Rauch, it was the ethical side of religion that truly mattered. In response to the assertion that Reform had gone too far in its modernization, he suggested a more fitting question be posed: "Have the changes detracted from the dignity of Judaism or are they of a nature calculated to add new luster to the spiritual and ethical side of Judaism?"³²³ The message to which Rauch kept returning was that the religious attitude of the Jewish people will never change, but the expression of that attitude needed to change with the times.³²⁴ He admitted that this approach was not without its difficulties. Just as there had been inconsistencies in the Hamburg Prayer-book, they would also exist in Reform Judaism. "The Movement has not been completely worked out. Each day reveals new needs. But we are not groping in the dark. The principle has been firmly established."³²⁵

Rauch's view on Jewish history informed his view on the Jewish future. For him, they were closely connected. Rauch asserted that there was no reason to believe that Jews in the future would waiver from their historic role.³²⁶ "Jews will remain Jews. I mean by this, that they will remain loyal to their historic and religious past."³²⁷ He was unwavering in his opposition to the Zionist notion of the ingathering of the Jewish exiles

³²² Joseph Rauch, *Reform Judaism* (No Date).

³²³ Ibid.

³²⁴ Joseph Rauch, *Liberal Judaism Historically Considered* (March 3, 1914). "The religious attitude will perhaps never change but the way in which the heart interprets its feelings to God is constantly changing. That which grows must undergo modifications."

³²⁵ Ibid.

³²⁶ Joseph Rauch, *The Place of the Jew in the Future* (Louisville: March 16, 1920). Read before the faculty and students of the Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary. This sermon was read again on April 8, 1929. "So, whether we view the Jew subjectively as he thinks of himself or objectively as the world regards him, we arrive at the same result, namely, that he is a being in whom and for whom Judaism, i.e., religion, is the dominant life motive. As a Jew, and one who keeps in touch with Jewish hopes and aspirations, permit me to say that I know of no forces or tendency in contemporary Jewish Life aiming at a departure from this our historic position."

³²⁷ Ibid.

from throughout the world to Palestine. He declared that the future of the Jew would be in the land of their birth or their adoption.

In matters religious he expects to maintain his historic unique identity; in political matters he wants to have the privilege of being one, heart and soul, with the land of his birth or adoption; in culture and civilization, to cooperate with all other cultural and intellectual forces and movements. He hopes that Christianity will help him attain this new day as a twentieth century interpretation of the inspiring words taken from your own sacred literature: 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me' (Matthew 25:40).³²⁸

As has been noted above, Rauch emphasized his conviction that Jewish participation in worship services and religious observance was critically important to the success (or failure) of the Jewish experience in America. Without consistent participation in worship³²⁹ and holiday observance, there would be no Judaism. Preachments in this regard were foremost in Rauch's sermons. "Without the holidays, we are in danger of forgetting ourselves."³³⁰ Rauch taught that observance was a necessary aid to philosophy. Fifty years before the Reform movement would officially embrace a return to ritual observance, Rauch understood that belief needed to be coupled with action. The actions he prescribed were those of holiday observance, which as he taught, held major influence on the ethical life of the Jewish community. "For there is not a single Jewish holiday, without a thorough understanding of which, will show how full and replete it is of noble incentives."³³¹ To Rauch, Rosh Hashanah³³² was not just the marking of the passage of another year. It was a ritual opportunity for one to better

³²⁸ Joseph Rauch, *The Place of the Jew in the Future* (Louisville: March 16, 1920).

³²⁹ Joseph Rauch, *An Hour With God* (No Date). This is a concept that Rauch repeated throughout his rabbinate as in this excerpt: "Religious worship is an affirmation of this. The hour of worship is the testimony from the congregation that it is resolved to do its utmost to make of as large a part of the world as possible a tabernacle for worshippers to extol God and to make His teachings daily realities."

³³⁰ Joseph Rauch, *A Plea for the Maintenance of Jewish Holidays* (No Date). This was a Rosh Hashanah Sermon.

³³¹ Ibid.

marking of the passage of another year. It was a ritual opportunity for one to better himself; [Rosh Hashanah is a] "halting phase calling man's attention to what he is doing, how he utilized the opportunities and abilities with which God blessed him. To every Jew this day presents the question, are you a Jew at heart only, or by name, have you improved yourself during the past year?"³³³

The Sabbath, Rauch preached, was another essential element in the religious life of the Jewish people. According to Rauch, the Sabbath was the time when the community reconnected and drew closer to God.³³⁴ Here, Rauch was able to combine two of his favorite teachings; observance of Jewish holidays and attendance at services, "If the Sabbath is one of the covenants between Israel and God...then we should keep the covenant in a very profound sense. Let us not study the weather conditions in coming to the house of God, nor count the minutes while we are there...Keeping the Sabbath was one of the ways to sanctify the whole of Jewish life and this thought should dominate our Sabbath Eve."³³⁵

Rauch never believed that the Jewish holidays were simply for children. Holidays such as Shabbat and Rosh Hashanah had tremendous value in the modern world. His sermons on the holidays elucidated these values. For the holiday of Purim, Rauch focused on the value of standing up for one's people.³³⁶ Quoting the Book of Esther,³³⁷

³³²Rosh Hashanah is the holiday that marks the New Year on the Jewish liturgical calendar. The words literally translate to "The Head of the Year."

³³³Joseph Rauch, *A Plea for the Maintenance of Jewish Holidays* (No Date). This was a Rosh Hashanah Sermon.

³³⁴Joseph Rauch, *Can We Recapture the Traditional Spirit of Sabbath?* (Louisville: March 4, 1932). Delivered on the occasion of returning to Friday Evening Services after 40 years of Sunday Mornings. "In every ordinance relating to the Sabbath of Judaism there is the explicit desire to draw man near to God by reminding of God's presence and His Creative work."

³³⁵Ibid.

³³⁶Joseph Rauch, *Modern Significance of Purim* (No Date). Writer believes this sermon to have been written in the 1950s because of references Rauch made to leaders in the Civil Rights Movement.

Rauch taught that Purim's true message was that one ought to be a proud, open Jew. He exhorted his congregation to stand up for what they believed.

In his lessons about Passover, Rauch taught about the triumph of freedom over tyranny. He taught this by using contemporary references. Using history to make his point, Rauch taught that the Jewish people had survived in the past and because of this, they will overcome current problems too. To Rauch, Hitler was pharaoh incarnate.³³⁸ Passover was the perfect illustration of the value of freedom and, of course, it naturally applied to all time. "We shall tell the old-new story of Passover this year as we have during eons of time. We shall tell it in all the corners of the earth and we shall continue to recite it until tyrants will have been removed from the earth, man everywhere liberated and the light of liberty made secure to shine and gladden all the habitations of the children of the human race."³³⁹

In this same way, Rauch preached that Chanukah was about much more than the cruse of oil described in the popular Chanukah story as depicted in the Talmud.³⁴⁰ He wrote that the true miracle of Chanukah was that the Jews still existed in the world. Those who have been the adversaries of the people of Israel, "forgot to count the spirit, they did not realize that the Guardian of Israel neither sleepeth nor slumbereth and that as

³³⁷Esther 4:13-14. "Mordecai had this message delivered to Esther: 'Do not imagine that you, of all the Jews, will escape with your life by being in the King's palace. On the contrary, if you keep silent in this crisis, relief and deliverance will come to the Jews from another quarter, while you and your father's house will perish. And who knows, perhaps you have attained to royal position for just such a crisis.'"

³³⁸Joseph Rauch, *Passover Reflections* (No Date). With the references to Hitler, the writer places this sermon in 1938-39. "The Haggadah is a running contemporary story in the framework of antiquity. Outer slavery was imposed upon us time and again but our spirit always remained free. Passover has been an ultra modern festival in every age. It is so today. Names have changed. Instead of Python and Raames we have Nuremberg and Moscow, instead of Egypt we have Central Europe. Pharaoh is re-incarnated in Hitler. Israel is the same. God is the same. Hope in a humanity liberated is the same and even the Promised Land is the same."

³³⁹Ibid.

³⁴⁰Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 21b.

long as Israel looked above for strength and for inspiration those working below could not bring about the destruction of the people of the Lord."³⁴¹

Rauch wrote extensively about theology. As he sought to build up his congregation with Jewish knowledge and awareness, he used his theologically oriented sermons to help his followers better comprehend the world in which they lived. Rauch's congregants lived under unique conditions in the history of the Jewish people. From the treacherous situations that began in Germany and Russia in the early part of the century, both World Wars, and Arab aggression throughout, it was indeed hard for Jews in Louisville, Kentucky, to grasp theologically what was happening to their brethren overseas. Rauch firmly believed that a strong faith system, one based on a belief in the One True God,³⁴² would sustain the community in difficult times. He asserted that humans held onto religion because they could not live without it. Judaism has fought against agnosticism, atheism, and indifference, "with reverence, a conviction that good will prevail over the bad and that God Almighty has a spiritual destiny for the human family."³⁴³ In another sermon Rauch simply stated, "Hope makes for helpfulness. Hope

³⁴¹Joseph Rauch, *A Chanukah Sermon* (No Date). The content suggests it was written in the 1940s shortly after the Holocaust ended. "To those who would brush aside the simple narrative as childish we would say that the miracle of the oil is not nearly as great as the miracle involved in maintaining the spiritual light which Judaism has been giving to the world under the most adverse conditions. More than one time did it seem not only to the world but to us that according to all human calculations we must perish, that our light must go out forever. When nation after nation overwhelmed, when the eternal darkness threatened to cover us. Then the unexpected happened with our people as it did with the cruise of oil. Strength came to us we knew not whence. The miracle always happened. The miracle is happening today. After every great defeat it was prophesied that our end has come. When the mighty rose against us those that knew us not, they foretold destruction. They pointed to other people, stronger and more numerous than we, who went under and said that the same must take place with us. They took into consideration the physical assets only. They forgot to count the spirit, they did not realize that the Guardian of Israel neither sleepeth nor slumbereth and that as long as Israel looked above for strength and for inspiration those working below could not bring about the destruction of the people of the Lord." Story based on the Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 21b.

³⁴²As he stated in *"God the Starting Point and Goal in Religious Studies,"* delivered before the Jewish Chautauqua Society in 1921, there is no higher ideal that can be taught than that of searching for God.

³⁴³Joseph Rauch, *An Hour With God* (No Date).

in Judaism implies a reliance on God who will not forsake us.”³⁴⁴ This very optimism is vividly apparent throughout all of Rauch’s theological writings.

The search for God was something that Rauch found to be of utmost importance. Whatever one believed God to be, Rauch preached that each person needed to search for the message that God was trying to deliver. “My own belief,” he wrote, “is that there is no activity to which men and women of our day should give themselves with greater zeal than to search for God and to try and hear what His still small voice has to say on the things that disturb you and me, that have robbed us of peace of mind, that are destroying decency, friendliness, justice and are threatening everything that to so many of us is precious, sacred and beautiful.”³⁴⁵ God is perfect and therefore each person who seeks God seeks perfection. According to Rauch there was no higher objective to life because in the search for God, all else is accomplished. “The soul’s yearning for God is man’s reaching out after perfection.”³⁴⁶

Rauch had an answer for those who argued that God could not be proven to exist. “No sane and intelligent man would deny the existence of the heavenly spheres which the science of astronomy assures us exists and move about our planet in the manner in which they describe. Yet if we were to depend on the naked eye we would be compelled to deny their existence, because no naked eye ever beheld a planet, much less saw that planet move. As it is with these telescopic magnitudes so is it with microscopic particles.”³⁴⁷ Just as we need certain tools to assist us in seeing things that are not apparent to the naked eye, so it is with the human’s search for God. Rauch taught that

³⁴⁴Joseph Rauch, *The Altruism of Hope* (December 12, 1914).

³⁴⁵Joseph Rauch, *The Quest of the Soul* (Delivered on the “Church of the Air” on CBS, February 13, 1938).

³⁴⁶Ibid.

³⁴⁷Joseph Rauch, *How to Know God* (No Date).

only through unconditional love may one come to know God. Love is the tool by which God can be found.³⁴⁸ "It is this kind of love by which men learn to know God. To know God is to love His creatures, to know God is to have the highest regard for morality and justice, to know God is to encourage the sublime and the lofty, to know God is to become more sympathetic towards the weak and the unfortunate, to know is to foster a love for all creatures, to know God is to become imbued with every noble sentiment that the world has received as heritage from the men and women who have been the best exponents of God like truths and principles."³⁴⁹

As much as Rauch preached conventionally on the concept of God in Judaism, he also allowed for the transformation, evolution, and supersession of ideas in its regard. He acknowledged that the God Jews worship may not be exactly how God is described in Jewish texts. "Our God is not altogether the same as the God of our ancestors nor is our faith in Him and worship of Him quite like theirs."³⁵⁰ He taught that God is the word that has always been used even when its meaning changed. But the human need for it, regardless of its exact meaning, has not changed. That human need for God is derived from the fact that humans are not self-sufficient. Beliefs change because realities change. Rauch used the word evolution to describe this process. Wherever humans find themselves in the process of "spiritual evolution,"³⁵¹ it is the search for God that matters most. Parallel to what he preached in other sermons, "This quest for the better, the

³⁴⁸Here he cited Deuteronomy 6:5, "You shall Love the Lord Your God."

³⁴⁹Joseph Rauch, *How to Know God* (No Date).

³⁵⁰Joseph Rauch, *Permanent and Transient Elements in our God Idea* (No Date).

³⁵¹Ibid.

nobler, the purer is man's search for God, it is his spiritual evolution no less real and no less true than his physical enfoldment."³⁵²

Rauch lived through the Holocaust as a rabbi in America. Certainly he was asked by many of his congregants, "Where is God?"³⁵³ So much must he have been asked this question that he preached on the topic a few times in the 1940s during and after the Holocaust. Rauch sharply responded to such questions³⁵⁴ in his sermons by stating that it was not God who had forgotten humanity, but rather humanity that had forgotten God.³⁵⁵ "'Where is thy God?' they say and in the question there is the twofold implication either there is no God or that He is the cause of it."³⁵⁶ As Rauch always did, he preached that the answer was to turn toward God, not to question God's existence.

Rauch refused to give up on what Jewish tradition taught simply because the form in which it was handed down through the generations no longer resonated with modern man. Such was the case with immortality. His understanding of immortality was based on the notion that immortality does not refer to individuals, but rather it occurs through humanity as a whole. "The notion of immortality through humanity is not only sounder in principle, but loftier in thought."³⁵⁷ Each generation is replaced by the next and

³⁵²Joseph Rauch, *Permanent and Transient Elements in our God Idea* (No Date).

³⁵³Joseph Rauch, *Where is God?* (Louisville: March 30, 1941). This sermon was delivered on WHAS radio in Louisville.

³⁵⁴Ibid. "Why do so many innocent people suffer so much in our generation? Why are people who have done no wrong blown to bits, or sunk in torpedoed boats, or tortured in concentration camps, or at best torn from their homes and like Satan in the book of Job made to wander up and down the world with no place that offers rest?"

³⁵⁵Ibid. "Let it be said in answer to the question, 'Where is thy God' that God, His teachings, His purpose, His will are here but men have turned their backs on them. The fault as I see it is not with God, but with man. It is not God who has declared war, robbed countries, enslaved people, starved the helpless and rained destruction on the innocent. No man has done this in obedience to a divine charge... To those who ask 'Where is God' in all this frightful holocaust the answer is God is everywhere but wicked leaders are denying Him, they are deriding His teaching and purging in so far as they can every human being who is trying to order his life in accordance with what is regarded as divine instructions."

³⁵⁶Ibid.

³⁵⁷Joseph Rauch, *Random Thoughts on Immortality* (No Date).

through this process, the ideas and thoughts created are kept alive.³⁵⁸ "We are the immortals while we live and continue in our immortality when we are replaced by the next generation."³⁵⁹

National identity in relationship to being Jewish was a topic on which Rauch wrote extensively. He was very much concerned with how the Jewish citizen was perceived by his fellow Americans. Rauch consistently preached that Judaism was a religion not a race. This one notion was paramount to Rauch's beliefs about America, and this stance ultimately affected his thoughts about Zionism. As far as Rauch was concerned, there was no greater country on the face of the earth than the United States of America. Its value system was only comparable to the great religions. "Here in the United States human values have been raised to a height never attained in the past and not surpassed by any people of our own age. These must remain. With our loyalty and with God's help they will remain."³⁶⁰ But these values were not just a nice thing. They were the basis of a sound, free, religious existence. It was almost as if America had taken the next step from where religion had left off.³⁶¹

To Rauch, there was no safer place for Jews to live than in America. He was well versed in American Jewish history and spoke of it frequently. He gave sermons to non-Jewish audiences on the topic in order to publicize the role that Jews had played in

³⁵⁸ Joseph Rauch, *Random Thoughts on Immortality* (No Date). "[Regarding] the notion of the past, we would say, that there is no possibility of doubt that the spirit which the bodies of the past exhibited live in this world. Every succeeding day sees a larger increase of these spirits. Not a thought has died. Not a spiritual contribution has been lost in the transition from bodily activity to physical rest or inertia. All are carefully recorded."

³⁵⁹ Ibid.

³⁶⁰ Joseph Rauch, *Human Values in American Civilization* (Delivered before the Rotary Club of Louisville, November 23, 1938).

³⁶¹ Ibid. In America, "a man is significant in his own being and has inalienable rights apart from those that government and society may claim from him. Religion attempted to express that in the phrase that man is created in the image of God, that there is something of divinity, of nobility, of grandeur, of inviolability in the individual and that under proper conditions of life and government these could be more and more brought to light and to expression. It implied freedom."

helping Columbus achieve his mission in his exploration.³⁶² According to Rauch, there was very little real anti-Semitism in the country. He claimed that the history of the United States "breathes tolerance and fairness to all."³⁶³ Yet he did admit that there had been occurrences of anti-Semitism in the country. His words show that he refused to blame it on his neighbors, rather the fault was with the Jew. The Jew was the one that had to watch his actions so as not to bring anti-Semitism upon himself.

We should ever show by precept and by example that our ideals are not centered in money or in idleness as is claimed by so many of our European detractors, but that we ever aim to the realization of the highest qualities of citizenship and an equally high standard of manhood and womanhood. By this we shall keep away from this country these evils of race hatred which have infested Europe during the middle ages and which have on occasion been heralded in this country by Foreigners.³⁶⁴

There was, however, one issue that Rauch considered anti-Semitic that he would not overlook. This issue was that of Russia ignoring the Russo-American Treaty of 1832³⁶⁵ with America in regards to Jewish travel there. Rauch contended that America needed to be taken to task for not supporting its own citizens in this matter. He harshly criticized government officials who idly did nothing to reverse the trend. "Of late, some of our officers have shown a leaning in many important questions so to decide matters of

³⁶²Joseph Rauch, *Jewish Traces in Early American History* (No Date).

³⁶³Joseph Rauch, *Anti-Hebrewism in the United States* (No Date). The references in the sermon suggest that it was written in the early 1920s.

³⁶⁴*Ibid.*

³⁶⁵In 1832, a treaty was achieved between Russia and the United States that allowed for citizens of each country to assume rights in the other country. This was to mean that individuals could enter each country to travel and to attend to business ventures. Yet the Russian authorities never adhered to their part of the treaty in regards to American Jews. They treated American Jews entering Russia in the same restricted and oppressive manner with which they treated Russian Jews. Prominent American Jewish leaders and the American Jewish Committee spent many years during the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century attempting to get the American government to exit from the treaty. This was the first "battle" of significance that the American Jewish Committee successfully affected. The treaty was terminated by the United States December 17, 1911. See Naomi W. Cohen, "The Abrogation of the Russo-American Treaty of 1832," *Jewish Social Studies*, XXV (January 1963):3; and Jacob Rader Marcus, *United States Jewry 1776-1985* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1993), Volume III: 105.

state to gain favor either with our financial aristocracy or with European snobocracy."³⁶⁶ In his preaching about the wonderful aspects of America, Rauch's feelings about Europe are made clear. He frequently contrasted the United States with Europe to show how bad it was there, and how good it was here. "We are at a crossroads. We have the choice of continuing on the great American highway leading to broader and happier fields of freedom, tolerance, and security, or to follow the winding and dark and dangerous path which will bring us to Europe's abysmal whirlpool with its jealousies, hatreds, wars, oppressions, militarism and the curses these always bring in their train."³⁶⁷ Rauch advocated a stance of philanthropic support for those who were in need overseas, but that politically the United States should return to the days of isolationist policies from before the First World War. American successes have been possible because "we kept to ourselves."³⁶⁸

Rauch understood that Jews in America were living in the best place possible for their religious expression during the first half of the twentieth century.³⁶⁹ He also understood that what would hurt Judaism in America most had little to do with the non-Jews with whom Jews lived. He feared most the factionalism that created bad feeling among Jews of different persuasions. "The Religious house of Israel divided against itself is what confronts us in the United States. It is a danger far more serious than is even antisemitism. We can fight dangers and enemies from without. We have always

³⁶⁶ Joseph Rauch, *An American Jewish Question* (No Date).

³⁶⁷ Joseph Rauch, *An Alliance of Americans for America* (Louisville: February 22, 1921). This address was delivered before the students and faculty of the University of Kentucky on the occasion of George Washington's birthday.

³⁶⁸ Ibid.

³⁶⁹ This notion of the Old World as a terrible place for the Jews and America as the only place for the Jews was a common conception. I.M. Wise held these same beliefs, which he expressed in his *Credo on American Judaism*. See Isaac Mayer Wise, *Wise's Credo on American Judaism*, ed. Gary P. Zola (Cincinnati: American Jewish Archives), 6.

overcome those. But enemies from within are not so easily defeated."³⁷⁰ Rauch preached that much more could be accomplished within, and by, the American Jewish community if they would just consolidate their efforts. He argued that it would increase their strength and influence and that it would allow for larger levels of philanthropy.³⁷¹

Rauch's identity as a Jew was firmly tied to his American identity. He appreciated what America had to offer its citizens, the likes of which were to be found nowhere else on earth. This may be the source of his negative assessment of Zionism. He no more wished to be gathered in as an exile to Palestine than returned to his native land of Galicia. But Rauch also made a clear distinction between the political hopes of Zionism and the Jews' spiritual connection to Palestine. He wrote, "There is a spiritual value in an appreciation of what Palestine has done for us irrespective of Zionism or anti-Zionism...It is as natural for the Jew to love Palestine as it is for him to breathe the air in which he lives."³⁷² He made it very clear in his sermons that he was not interested in any connection to political Zionism,³⁷³ but at the same time, he taught that modern Jews could not forget Zion in their hearts.³⁷⁴

As time went on, the character of Rauch's rhetoric against Zionism became harsher. Rather than remain neutral on the issue, he spoke very strongly against anyone becoming a Zionist either in thought or action. He refused to accept the notion that living outside of the biblical land of Israel was a punishment. He believed it to be part of Judaism's Divine mission. He had to live in the Diaspora in order to deliver Judaism's

³⁷⁰Joseph Rauch, *Judaism in America* (Sioux City: No Date). This sermon was delivered to the non-Jewish friends of the members of Mt. Sinai in Iowa. They were invited to hear the address.

³⁷¹*Ibid.*

³⁷²Joseph Rauch, *Ancient Palestine and the Modern Jew* (January 17, 1915).

³⁷³See chapter three for a discussion of Rauch's affiliation on the issue of Zionism.

³⁷⁴Joseph Rauch, *Ancient Palestine and the Modern Jew* (January 17, 1915). "The modern Jew can as little afford to forget Palestine as could his ancestor of the middle ages. It is still the sacred place to which we turn...this is not Zionism which is concerned with a political rehabilitation of the Jews."

message to the world. Rauch did understand that at one point there would have been nowhere better to live. But since the French enlightenment, there had been absolutely no reason for Jews who lived in good conditions to consider a return to Palestine.³⁷⁵ Rauch considered it an insult to his American identity that he should even consider a return to Palestine. He also believed that it was not possible to return the Jews to Palestine.³⁷⁶ He preached that it would be impossible even to attempt such a transfer of people.³⁷⁷

Rauch believed that, at the end of World War I, Russia was on the brink of becoming a nation like America where all were free to do as they pleased, and to practice religion as they wished. He therefore believed that there was no longer any need for Zionism. Rauch preached that the mission of the Jewish people had become such that they must teach the world about internationalism. He believed they could show the world that people can have a bond that is stronger than nationalistic bonds.

Our view of internationalism is very unpopular now. Nations do not want to think that the time will come when they will all be friendly again. But the example of the Jew will gain force and followers. What we have done

³⁷⁵Joseph Rauch, *The Dangers of Zionism* (Louisville: January 20, 1918). "The longing for a restored Israel on Palestinian soil was universal in our midst until the Napoleonic period ushered in the era of emancipation. This was scarcely done when a new viewpoint was introduced, that which has since characterized the interpretation given Judaism by the Reform movement. It brought to light the new thought in Judaism's development that the Diaspora was not only punishment for Israel's sins but was also part of the Divine plan by which he was to carry out his destiny as the Servant of the Lord; that what he had once done in and through Palestine he was now to do in the world directly."

³⁷⁶Ibid. "But as the years passed on Time, the just and fallible critic of all movements began to point out insurmountable difficulties involved in the schemes of Zionism. How can a people be moved? Who will secure Palestine? Who will furnish the means to rehabilitate the returned people? Is Palestine able to support the masses that will come to it? Shall the return to Asia be the culmination of twenty centuries of heroic life and spiritual strivings? Shall petty nationalism be the climax to our ethical and universal monotheism? Shall we, who for a century have insisted that we are citizens of the land of our birth or adoption, give the lie to our protestations and suddenly avow that all along our hearts and allegiance were with Palestine?"

³⁷⁷Joseph Rauch, *The Shortcomings of the Modern Nationalistic Tendencies* (No Date). The sermon makes reference to Turkey still having sovereign control over Palestine. "...how many could Palestine really accommodate? 1 million...and Russia and Rumania have 7 million. No one has the money to do it. Not every Jew is a Rothschild...What would they do there? There is no *Manna*. Think about the difficulties faced when immigrants come to America with all the resources in place here...Our objection to Zionism is grounded on the fact that the scheme is visionary. Were it at all practical and offered a solution...then it might be different."

others can do. We live throughout the world under as many forms of government as it has and we're held together by spiritual bonds. The time must come when the nations will establish the same relationship among each other. This is a noble service, which we can best render by refusing modern narrow Nationalism offered us by Zionism. The servant of the Lord has now the task of teaching the nations this new internationalism. He will succeed in this as he has succeeded when he set out to bring the nations to God Almighty.³⁷⁸

Rauch preached that Palestine ought to be a land for all people with specific settlement communities for Jews.³⁷⁹ "Palestine is an international Holy Land."³⁸⁰

Rauch never altered his resolve against Zionism.³⁸¹ Even after Israel became a state in 1948, he continued to preach that it was an unnecessary venture in regards to the state's ideological nature.³⁸² He believed that the desire to return to Israel for religious reasons was irrational. At one time in the history of Israel, this was not so. He taught the source of nationalism goes back to the beginning of Israel's history when if you were outside Canaan, you were likely a slave. It would make perfect sense that to be in good standing with God, you needed to be physically in Israel. But this was no longer true.³⁸³ But then the Jewish People realized that God was not so inexorably connected to the

³⁷⁸ Joseph Rauch, *Ancient Palestine and the Modern Jew* (January 17, 1915).

³⁷⁹ Joseph Rauch, *Contemporary Palestine* (No Date).

³⁸⁰ Ibid. In stating that Jews should be able to build up a homeland in places that have laid waste for centuries, he called for friendliness between Arabs and Jews. "If the hotheads of both sides shall be rigidly controlled the peoples of the two religions will be again drawn in amity and in friendly co-operation. The normal status between Arabs and Jews is friendliness and this can be restored if England and the League of Nations will see fit to bring it about."

³⁸¹ Joseph Rauch, *Our Relation to the New State of Israel* (October 10, 1951). This sermon was delivered on the morning of Yom Kippur.

³⁸² Rauch did announce from the pulpit that he was proud to associate with the Jewish state regardless of his ideological concerns. See footnote 241.

³⁸³ Joseph Rauch, *Our Relation to the New State of Israel* (October 10, 1951). It is not surprising that one would think that God only had powers in Israel...It is a primitive belief, but understandable...Captivity in other lands always meant slavery and an inability to worship God...so it makes further sense that God has special powers in Israel.

Land. "We began to differentiate between the primary and the secondary. First came God then came the land. What is more, God could be had without the Land."³⁸⁴

Rauch resented very much being told that he could not lead a full Jewish life in America.

You and I do not want a foreign political government to tell us where we belong and where we should go, even though that foreign government is Jewish. With us this is not debatable it is absolute. We acknowledge a spiritual kinship with our people in Israel. We have shown in a most tangible and generous manner that we hold ourselves responsible to assist our brethren who are hard pressed. We are even willing to do our share to help the government to secure capital funds for the upbuilding of its industry so the present population and others that are coming and will continue to come for sometime in the future may be able to earn a livelihood on a higher and better standard than the concentration camps in the West and the squalid ghettos the Orient afforded... The union that binds us together is a religious one. We acknowledge no other.³⁸⁵

This was how Rauch described the relationship between American Jews and those who chose to live in the modern state of Israel.

Through the analysis of much of what Rauch wrote during his rabbinate, it has become clear that his vision of an American Reform Judaism was very much based on the prophetic ideals of Judaism. As a rabbi he sought to speak for the misfortunate in the country who had no public voice in order that his congregants would be moved to acts of philanthropy.

To Rauch the pulpit was a platform from which to elevate his listeners in the way of life that Judaism prescribed, and his words were his tools. Rauch was a teacher, a pastor, and a scholar. Indeed, these were the attributes he used to describe the best

³⁸⁴Joseph Rauch, *Our Relation to the New State of Israel* (October 10, 1951).

³⁸⁵*Ibid.*

qualities of the modern rabbi.³⁸⁶ His goal was for Jews in his congregation to be both religious and of the modern world. Reform, as he taught and lived it, had the purpose of providing a religious and ethical way of life. The underlying goal in all that Rauch wrote was to bring the Jew into alignment with the culture in which he lived. This he accomplished with eloquence, scholarship, and his ability to illumine Jewish values and precepts with relevant modern cultural context.

³⁸⁶Joseph Rauch, *The Rabbi as Viewed by the Rabbi* (Delivered January 6, 1920).

Conclusion

On the day that Joseph Rauch died, his name was synonymous with Judaism in Kentucky. In the half century since his death no historical research on him has been published. This thesis has sought to reconstruct Rauch's life and career to serve as a case study of the American Reform rabbi during the first half of the twentieth century. Through this analysis we understand the development of the American Reform movement during that period. This thesis is an examination of how this particular rabbi contributed to American Jewish life. Much of Rauch's professional involvement is relevant to our own understanding of the development of the Reform movement and the role of the *rabbi*. Rauch's biography itself provides historically significant commentary on his life, his rabbinate, and some of the more significant issues of his day such as Zionism and interfaith marriages.

Although Rauch was born in Austria and spent his young life there, he was raised as an American from the time he immigrated at ten years of age. Rauch fully embraced his American identity in all that he did, yet he held fast to his Jewish tradition at a time when many new immigrants found the allure of assimilation very powerful. He fervently believed that one could be an American and a Jew. Rauch's professional life is an example of an American Jewish leader who sought to reconcile this hyphenated existence. The fact that both aspects of his identity – Judaism and Americanism – were so integrated is highlighted by the official mourning instituted by Louisville county upon his death.

Rauch entered the rabbinate during a pivotal time for the Reform movement as its institutions each celebrated more than a decade of existence. He personally experienced

the “changing of the guard” at the helm of Hebrew Union College from I. M. Wise to Moses Mielziner to Kaufmann Kohler. Because of that experience he was one of the few people who bridged the first two generations of leadership in the movement. Rauch was among the second generation of American trained congregational rabbis – born in Europe but educated in the United States. His rabbinate reflects the Reform movement as it matured in the twentieth century. With the establishment and growth of Reform Judaism’s institutions, Rauch was able to function entirely from within a Reform organizational environment in a way not possible for his predecessors.

Rauch was an advocate on a number of issues that were of importance to him and to the community he served. As a modern proverb holds, each rabbi has only two or three messages which he preaches throughout their career. In a professional sense, these few messages define who the rabbi is. Through analysis of the hundreds of sermons Rauch gave, his various professional activities, and his personal interests, it has become clear that at the center of his rabbinic message were the values of worship, interfaith work, political involvement, and social action.

Rauch’s experiences in the pulpit rabbinate shed light on the Jewish world of the early twentieth century and the concerns that rabbis and synagogues faced. In his 1866 poem, “Awake My People!” Judah Leib Gordon instructs that one ought to, “Be a man abroad and a Jew in your tent.”³⁸⁷ Rauch would have disagreed. For him, the twentieth century American Reform Jew could be a Jew both “abroad” and in the “tent.”

Rauch’s interest in education extended both to the synagogue as an educational institution as well as the home. Each place had a role in teaching American Jews to be

³⁸⁷ Judah Leib Gordon, *Awake My People!*, ed. Paul Mendes-Flohr & Jehuda Reinharz, “The Jew In The Modern World: A Documentary History” (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 384.

ethical and moral. Each was necessary in the effort to imbue the values of civic virtue and a strong Jewishly centered life in his congregants. As a pastoral figure in his congregation, Rauch was a model of a rabbi who displayed warmth and empathy to his people. As he preached to HUC students, Rauch believed in coming off the pulpit to be directly involved and relevant in the lives of the members of his community. He desired to have close personal contact with those whom he served. Those who called Rauch their rabbi knew him as a warm and loving parental figure who was skilled at building the human bond of friendship.

Rauch's pastoral philosophy shaped his view of worship. It is historically significant that worship was such a focus of his rabbinate. As we have learned, Adath Israel of Louisville was one of the last congregations in the Reform movement to shift its major worship service from Sunday morning to Friday evening. At the same time the congregation maintained the traditional practice of holding daily *yartzeit* services. Through his leadership worship experiences were created to meet the religious needs of the members whether for the Sabbath, for spiritual or intellectual edification, or for mourning purposes. Yet his ongoing frustrations with the problem of poor attendance at worship services is also instructive. Rauch's struggle to enrich Jewish interest in worship sharpens our perspective on the topic of prayer in American Reform Judaism. It is clear that contemporary synagogues that continue to face low numbers of worshippers during regular congregational services are not dealing with a new problem.

In addition to a remarkable devotion to the prayer experience itself, Rauch's career exemplifies an interest in the content of the worship service. Rauch's earnest

desire to elevate his congregation to active worship demonstrates how a Classical Reform rabbi was significantly more concerned with the goal of prayer than with its form.

For Joseph Rauch, Jewish and American identities were never mutually exclusive. To the contrary, they were entirely compatible identities. In many ways, Rauch embodied the accomplishments of the American Jew during the first half of the twentieth century. He believed in the potency of his integrated identity, and he projected that ideology into everything he did. Through his communal participation, locally and otherwise, he championed the expansion and proliferation of Reform Jewish ideology and American democratic values. Rauch was a patriotic American and a dedicated liberal Jew.

As we have seen, Rauch's rabbinical career expressed itself almost entirely through the institutional infrastructure of Reform Judaism. Such a career would have been impossible in the last half of the nineteenth century because not all of these institutions had come into being. Just as the United States government embodied the best values of democracy for Rauch, so did the political process of the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR). In collaboration with other Reform rabbis, Rauch demonstrated the possible influence of a substantial union of rabbis. Through his involvement with the CCAR's Committee for Separation of Church and State, Rauch was able to influence American Jewry on socio-political issues such as Christmas celebrations in public schools and Christian dogmatic teachings in text books. Rauch's career exemplifies how Reform rabbis worked through the CCAR to address political concerns and issues of social justice *in addition* to contemporary religious matters.

Rauch also helped to project these same values to an international audience through his involvement with the World Union for Progressive Judaism. He was so committed to Reform Judaism that he believed a liberal, progressive Judaism would benefit Jewry around the globe. Rauch also believed that America was a Jewish "Promised Land." He embraced these ideologies as an adult émigré from Europe to the United States, and he returned to the continent of his birth to extend those values there during the apex of his career.

Rauch's work in the Central Conference of American Rabbis also demonstrates how the Conference helped to shape religious issues during that era. Rauch's struggles in the CCAR reveals the diversity of opinion that existed within the Conference on various issues during the first half of the twentieth century. Topics such as conversion and the rabbi's position on officiating at interfaith marriages are two such examples. Rauch was instrumental in formulating the Conference's first guidelines for the process of conversion as editor of the *CCAR Manual for Instruction to Proselytes*. In this way, he helped the movement to develop an officially recognized document which reflected many of the commonly held opinions on the subject. Through the research in this regard we see one model of how a rabbi of that era viewed intermarriage. Rauch did not require conversion before agreeing to officiate at a wedding between a Jew and a non-Jew. He believed that a better way to create committed converts was to welcome them openly and to entice them to study. By exposing these sojourners to the beauty of Jewish observance, Rauch believed he could maximize the likelihood of an eventual conversion. Rauch's career sheds light on the evolution of rabbinic attitudes on conversion and

officiation at interfaith marriages. Rauch's rabbinate illuminates the complexity of this debate among the members of the CCAR during his lifetime.

Not all of the activities in which Rauch participated were specifically Jewish in nature. As we have seen, he was very involved in social service organizations like the Freemasons and Rotary. Rauch did not believe in keeping the Jewish citizens separate from the wider community. To the contrary, his life and career were dedicated to the principles of communal harmony, interfaith fellowship, and brotherly interaction. Rauch valued these ideals in his own life and through his career, and he encouraged others to follow suit.

Through the medium of the sermon, Rauch's emotional side reveals itself. His weekly homilies represent an emotive expression of his rabbinic values and personal beliefs. He spoke regularly and ardently about theological issues, Zionism, and the political concerns of his day. Speaking to HUC students as a visiting alumnus, Rauch explained his approach to sermonizing. He told these rabbinical students that he tried to anticipate the religious questions and concerns of his congregation when he crafted his sermon topics.

An examination of Rauch's sermons proves that this rabbi was deeply interested in theology. He spoke about God often. In this regard, Rauch exemplified strong faith. His God-concept evolved throughout his career. Sometimes he spoke of a corporeal God and at other times he spoke of God revealed through history. His theology was closely linked to his perception of worship. Rauch believed that worship was an opportunity for the Jews to renew their relationship with God. He was a was a man of religious faith who

sought to help others connect with God in an active manner, through education, through worship, and through their daily interactions.

Rauch's personal faith in God led to his involvement in social justice and political action. His rabbinate was characterized by political involvement on every level. The philanthropy that he personally accomplished, and that which he preached about, adds another historical dimension to his legacy. Rauch was not an extraordinarily wealthy man. Yet, he claimed that rabbis could only preach about causes of social justice to which they financially contributed. Rauch created the Adath Israel Memorial Fund, his own philanthropic fund within the temple. In addition to being a rabbinic example of a scholar, a social activist, a political activist, and a spiritual leader, Rauch also demonstrated significant charity work. As a rabbi, Rauch expressed his theological ideals largely through the institutional structure of American Reform Judaism.

Of the many significant messages that Rauch delivered through his sermons, his anti-Zionist ideology represents the one for which he came down on the wrong side of history. Having been adamantly opposed to Zionism during his entire career, he publicly accepted Israel's reality in 1948. Through a study of Rauch's anti-Zionist activities, we gain a greater historical perspective on those rabbis who strongly opposed a Jewish state for many years, but who came to terms with the state's existence in the end. After 1948, his name no longer appeared on the membership list of the American Council for Judaism. Rauch even visited the new nation on several occasions. Always looking to extend Reform Judaism and American values into places in which it did not exist, he was enthusiastic about the opportunity for the World Union for Progressive Judaism and the

Hebrew Union College to work in a concerted effort to modernize the Jewish institutions in Israel.

Joseph Rauch lived through some of the modern era's most critical moments. He personally was part of the world's mass migration during the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. He lived through two world wars, the Great Depression, the Holocaust, and the reconstitution of the modern state of Israel. All these events were defining moments in the twentieth century for world Jewry. He also witnessed some of humanity's greatest technological achievements: the invention of the automobile, the airplane and so forth. Throughout all of this – through 52 years in the rabbinate – Rauch developed a rabbinic model based on a comprehensive commitment to the building of a strong Reform Jewish community. As such, he serves as a case study that sheds light on how an American, HUC trained, rabbi lived and worked in the first half the twentieth century. From his life's accomplishments and legacy, we learn about one rabbi's model of the pulpit rabbinate. Rauch's life and career add texture and depth to our current understanding of the history of the American Reform movement, the proliferation of Reform ideology, the politics of the CCAR, pressing Jewish issues during his life, and the general state of Jewish life in the Central United States.

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