THE EULOGY AS A SERMONIC FORM

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE

In the Fall of 1974 I was called upon to officiate at my first funeral service. My immediate reaction was a naive enthusiasm. When I began to write the eulogy I was overcome by a gripping sense of fear. I felt incompetent and unworthy. I asked myself: "How do I prepare a eulogy?" The experience left its mark on me. Perhaps unconsciously, perhaps not, I chose the eulogy as the topic of my thesis. I wanted to know all that I could about the form and content of the eulogy. It is my hope that one day a student rabbi, faced with a "challenge" similar to mine, will find solace and instruction from my work.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express my deep appreciation to my Thesis Advisor, Professor Arthur M. Lesley, who gave of himself and of his valuable time in a manner reflecting the sensitive and concerned individual he is. From him I learned to appreciate the value of encouragement, the virtue of patience, and the integrity of scholarship.

I wish to also thank my roommate, Rabbi Marvin Gross, who spent almost as much time and energy on my thesis as did I. During my many moments of frustration he offered me support and wise instruction. I am proud to have shared my labor with such a trusted friend.

My appreciation is also extended to the library staff of the College - Institute in New York who generously and warmly assisted me throughout the writing of this study.

INTRODUCTION

Of the many demands facing the rabbi today, none is more challenging to his role as spiritual leader than his responsibility to officiate at the funeral service. As the official representative of Judaism, the rabbi must interpret the occasion of death to bring consolation to the mourners. Furthermore, he must justify to all present the continued need for faith; faith in the noble destiny of the living, and faith in the continued providence of the Divine who, according to traditional belief, must inspire the living. Given the awesome task of preparing a suitable and effective funeral oration (eulogy), the modern rabbi instinctively turns to his tradition for sustenance and edification. When he does he will discover a most inadequate body of literature in English which discusses the form and content of the eulogy.

A review of the secondary literature written on the eulogy will illustrate the problem. Scholars have almost exclusively studied the eulogy in its historical development as a prescribed mourning observance.[1] These scholars note Biblical and Talmudic references to the eulogy as a mourning custom surrounding the death of a sage or scholar. They point to the Shulchan Aruch as the major source for ritual prescriptions governing the eulogy. The Shulchan Aruch specifies the need to eulogize, the purpose in eulogizing, the times and places in which to eulogize, and other procedural matters, but it does not prescribe a particular content or form for the eulogy. The eulogist was apparently free to draw upon whatever homiletical tradition he deemed appropriate in order to fulfill the requirements of the prescribed ritual.

It becomes apparent that the eulogy must be discussed from two distinct perspectives. On the one hand, the eulogy can be seen as a prescribed mourning

ritual, to be performed according to regulations specified in legal literature. From this perspective, the eulogy lacks definition and shape. It remains a ritual ceremony without a prescribed ritual form. From another perspective, the eulogy becomes a significant homiletical form, the development of which, is closely related to the development of the sermon. The abstract ritual prescription to eulogize the deceased becomes defined in a homiletical form, following homiletical traditions.

Scholars have failed to appreciate this distinction in the nature of the eulogy and have hence exclusively studied the eulogy as a prescribed ritual observance. There does not exist in English any work which examines the eulogy as an occasional sermon. Furthermore, few scholars of homiletical literature, writing in any language, have addressed the subject of the eulogy as an example of the occasional sermon.[2] The eulogy as a sermonic form has thus been virtually ignored by all sides.

This thesis is a beginning step towards reaching a deeper understanding and appreciation of the eulogy as a sermonic form. It will specifically focus on: The manner in which halachic prescriptions stated in the Shulchan Aruch are realized in the sermonic form; the extent to which the homiletical tradition has influenced the formulation of the eulogy; the eulogy as a sermonic expression of the religious thought of the preacher; the eulogy as a source reflecting the historical environment of the preacher.

Necessary to this study is the selection of a primary text suitable for examination. Of those eulogies preserved in sermonic form which reflect halachic prescriptions established in legal literature, the majority date from the nineteenth century. The nineteenth century was a period in which Jewish

homiletics significantly developed. During this century the modern Jewish sermon grew in importance and became a vital instrument in transmitting religious and social instruction. The eulogy, as a sermonic form, undoubtedly was influenced by this increased interest in Jewish preaching.

The extent to which the nineteenth-century eulogy was considered important sermonic literature worth preserving is indicated by the fact that two bibliographic works on the eulogy were published during that period. Included in these bibliographies were the names of various individuals who died during the nineteenth century and the books in which their eulogies were found. Adolf Jellinek published one of these bibliographies in Vienna, in 1884, under the title Kuntres ha-Maspid.[3] The second bibliography was published by Bernhard Wachstein, also in Vienna, in 1922, under the title Maftaoh ha-Hespedim.[4]

Among the sources mentioned in Wachstein's index which were available to the present researcher, one text stood out as most suitable to the present study. The text, entitled, Tikkun Shelomo, was written by R. (Rabbi) Benjamin Solomon Zalman Spitzer, an orthodox rabbi active in Vienna in the middle of the nineteenth century. The text, which consists of Spitzer's sermons, novellae on Talmudic subjects, and eight funeral addresses was published by his son-in-law Joseph Baer Kohen in 1892.

There were several reasons why this particular text was chosen for examination. First, the eulogies clearly represent sermons delivered upon the occasion of death. Moreover, as an orthodox rabbi committed to halacha, Spitzer would be certain to satisfy legal prescriptions concerning the formulation of the eulogy. This text therefore reflects the dual nature of the eulogy: as a prescribed mourning ritual and as a sermonic form.

A second factor which influenced the choice of Tikkun Shelomo was its setting, Vienna. During the latter half of the nineteenth century, Vienna occupied a leading role in the Jewish world. Both liberal and orthodox Jewish scholars congregated in Vienna, the capital of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Early Zionist leaders helped make Vienna the birthplace of political Zionism. During the latter nineteenth century Vienna thus became a city of great Jewish diversity and for this reason provides a rich historical and religious setting.

A third factor suggesting the choice of Tikkun Shelomo was the prominent individuals Spitzer eulogized in his work. Among the eight eulogies one finds names such as Moses Montefiore, Samson Rafael Hirsch, Moses Schick, Abraham and Simeon Sofer, and Hirsch Kallischer, who were among the leading Jews of the nineteenth century.

Selected eulogies preserved in Tikkun Shelomo will thus serve as the primary source for examining the eulogy as a sermonic form. Background information will first be presented on the eulogy as a prescribed mourning observance. The study will then focus upon salient characteristics of the Jewish sermon. This will enable the reader to better appreciate the formulation of Spitzer's eulogies as occasional sermons. Further background information on the life of R. Solomon Spitzer and on his work in Vienna will follow. The study will then examine, in detail, the selected eulogies in Tikkun Shelomo. Some discussion will be presented concerning Spitzer's relationship to the men he eulogized. The content of the eulogies will then be examined as it reflects Spitzer's religious, social, and political thought. The discussion will address the basic question: What did Spitzer say in his eulogies and why did he say it? The final chapter of the study will focus upon the eulogy as a homiletical form in relationship to the Jewish sermon.

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

[1]Julius H. Greenstone, "Funeral Oration," The Jewish Encyclopedia (1901), V, 529. Meir Ydit, "Hesped," Encyclopedia Judaica, (1971), VIII, 429-430. "Hesped," Encyclopedia Talmudit, (1959), IX, 605-620. Maurice Lamm, The Jewish Way in Death and Mourning, (New York: Jonathan David Publishers, 1969), pp. 50-52. Hayym Schauss, The Lifetime of a Jew, (New York: UAHC, 1950), pp. 235-237.

[2]Simon Jacob Gliksberg, in his book, Torat ha-Derasha (1948), does devote one chapter (VIII) to the eulogy. In addition to reviewing Biblical and rabbinic sources for the eulogy, Gliksberg offers suggestions to the preacher concerning the proper delivery of the eulogy. Foremost among the suggestions is the need to keep the eulogy brief. In sum, there is no scholarly benefit to the discussion.

[3]Reprinted from Zunz Jubelschrift (Jubilee Volume), Berlin, 1884.

[4]German title page reads: Zur Bibliographie der Gedaechtnis-und Trauervortraege in Der Hebraeischen Literatur, Wien, 1922.

CHAPTER I

THE EULOGY AS A PRESCRIBED RITUAL OBSERVANCE

The modern term, "eulogy," derived from the Greek "eulogia," "to speak well of," is the common English word for the Hebrew term "HeSPeD." The root, S-P-D, is found throughout the Bible where it indicates a wail or lament as an expression of mourning over the dead body of a relative or friend. Examples of this expression are: Abraham's mourning for Sarah (Gen. 23:2); Joseph's mourning for Jacob (Gen. 50:10); and further, in Sam. II 1:12; Kings I 13:30; Jer. 22:18; and Jer. 34:5. Similar in meaning to this expression is the Biblical term, "KiNaH," which denotes a lament of mourning, pain or sorrow. Biblical references to this term are: David's lament over Saul and Jonathan (Sam. II 1:17); Ezekiel's lament over the King of Tyrus (Ezek. 28:12); and Ezekiel's lament over the Egyptian Pharoah (Ezek. 32:2). The Bible also indicates a category of professional mourners, both female (MeKoNNoT) and male (SoFDiM), who are called upon to lead the people in lament and in shedding tears (cf. Jer. 9:16-19, Ecc. 12:5, Chron. II 35:25).

Sufficient scholarly attention has not been given to the relationship between the two terms, HeSPeD and KiNaH. It is generally believed that the KiNaH, over a period of time, developed into the funeral oration known as the HeSPeD (eulogy).[1] Further research is needed to explain the nature of this development; the time at which the HeSPeD, as a funeral address, became a fixed institution at the funeral service; and the evolution of the positions of the MeKoNeNet and the SoFeD.

By Talmudic times the HeSPeD was an accepted custom surrounding the death of a scholar.[2] One issue of debate among the rabbis was whether the

HeSPeD should be considered as a consolation to the living or as an honor to the dead. It was decided (San. 47a) to consider it as an honor to the dead, perhaps because the sages believed that the deceased was capable of hearing the words uttered over him during the HeSPeD (Shab. 152b). While the rabbis do then record numerous excerpts of funeral addresses and engage in some technical discussion concerning the HeSPeD, they do not treat the subject of the HeSPeD in a detailed or systematic manner. Although the custom to eulogize the dead was recognized, no need was apparently felt to articulate a specific form and content for the address. Additional study of the HeSPeD is needed to determine the variety of forms it manifested during the Middle Ages.

The most comprehensive legal statement regarding the HeSPeD is found in the Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Deah 344. Included in this chapter are twenty paragraphs describing various technical and procedural matters relating to the HeSPeD. The first paragraph contains the only serious discussion concerning the substantive nature of the HeSPeD as a funeral address. The discussion relates that it is a great Mitzvah to deliver a HeSPeD in the proper fashion over the dead. The eulogist is counseled to raise his voice and speak words which break the heart of the mourners in order to encourage tears. The eulogist is also directed not to excessively exaggerate in his praise of the deceased. Concerning the content of his address, the eulogist is instructed simply to praise the noble attributes of the departed. A pious man should be praised for his righteousness, a scholar for his wisdom. The paragraph does not include, however, discussion of the form in which such praise should be delivered. Later, the form of praise is briefly described (par. 17) as permitting the utterance of scriptural passages and the delivery of a Derasha (sermon) to honor the dead. This Derasha, however, is not equated with the HeSPeD.

Of particular interest to this investigation is rabbinic discussion concerning the functional nature of the HeSPeD. It will be recalled that the Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh Deah 344:1) counsels the eulogist to speak words which will occasion tears and wails by the mourners. The rabbis in the Talmud and in later Jewish tradition focused upon the need to shed tears (Shab. 145b). In Palestine it was customary to begin the HeSPeD with the words: "Weep with him, ye who are of distressed heart (M.K. 8a)."[3] The occasion of death was interpreted by the rabbis as an indication of Divine judgment. It was God who was taking the life which he had previously given. Scripture compares the death of the righteous to a burning (srafa) caused by a wrathful God (cf. Lev. 10:6). In the passage in Leviticus, the congregation is instructed to wail and shed tears over God's destructive judgment. The rabbis interpreted such Divine retribution as an indication of the existence of great sin among the people. It is recorded in Shabbat 106a, that if one brother dies, all the brothers must feel troubled and examine their deeds in order to atone for their sin. According to Tosefta Moed Katan (Ch. II), when a righteous man dies, all the congregation must mourn his death. Sin amidst the congregation must be expiated by every member to receive Divine favor.

The rabbis, perhaps with an eye to Leviticus 10:6 and to Samuel II 1:12, encouraged the shedding of tears as an instrument of repentance. Moed Katan 25a states: "He who sheds tears and mourns over a worthy man, all his sins are forgiven him because of the honor he has done to the deceased." Tears themselves became a means through which to seek atonement for sin. This concept is further evidenced in Shabbat 105b: "He who sheds tears over a worthy man, the Holy One Blessed be He counts and places them in His storehouse." This statement comes as an interpretation of Psalms 56:9, "You keep track of my

wanderings, You store my tears in Your flask, in Your record book." The rabbis seem to suggest that human tears, shed as atonement offerings, are collected by God and serve to remind Him at a future time (Yom ha-Din) to bestow goodness upon the congregation.

It is interesting to note that this concept of sin and repentance through tears, though not explicit in the Shulchan Aruch text, is intimated in the seventeenth-century commentary, Be'er ha-Golah, by Moses Rivkes. There the reader is directed to the previously noted discussion in Shabbat 105b. The commentator considers the HeSPeD to be an instrument through which to occasion atonement for sin, by shedding tears. It assumes a function only implicit in its Biblical roots.

NOTES

CHAPTER I

[1]Abraham M. Haberman, "KiNaH," Encyclopedia Judaica, (1971), X, 1009-1010.

[2]e.g. Shab. 105b, 152b, 153a, Ber. 6b; Ket. 72a, 104a; M.K. 8a, 25b; Meg. 6a. A compilation of Talmudic and midrashic passages, suitable for use in the eulogy, is found in: Hyman E. Goldin, Hamadrikh, The Rabbi's Guide, (New York: Hebrew Publishing Company, 1956), pp. 216-224.

[3]Julius H. Greenstone, "Funeral Oration," p. 529.

CHAPTER II

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TRADITIONAL AND MODERN SERMON

A distinction is made in the Shulchan Aruch between a Derasha (sermon) in honor of the deceased (Yoreh Deah 344:17) and the HeSPeD as a mourning ritual which includes words of praise and lamentation (Yoreh Deah 344:1). It is most difficult to determine wher this distinction faded and the HeSPeD was combined with the funeral sermon to become a sermonic form. The HeSPeD (to be called henceforth "eulogy"), as a Derasha upon the occasion of death, clearly has been under the influence of the homiletical tradition. Homiletical rules governing the construction and delivery of the sermon undoubtedly have influenced the construction and delivery of the eulogy.

A presupposition of this study is the need to understand the eulogies of R. Solomon Spitzer as a sermonic form influenced by the development of the homiletical tradition. The purpose of the present chapter is to present a brief overview of the Jewish sermon in its development within the homiletical tradition as background to the appreciation of R. Spitzer's eulogies. The discussion will focus upon the characteristics of two particular sermonic forms: the traditional Derasha and the nineteenth-century "modern" Jewish sermon (called the Predigt in German). The discussion will be prefaced by a brief review of the two pioneering figures in the study of Jewish homiletics: Leopold Zunz and Israel Bettan.

The classic scholarly work on the topic of Jewish homiletics is Zunz's Gottesdienstliche Vortraege der Juden (1832).[1] Zunz's purpose in studying the history of the homiletical tradition was to demonstrate the antiquity of the sermon as a particular Jewish form. His work spans the history of homiletical

development from the prophetic age to his own day. Zunz ignores the eulogy as a distinct homiletical form and refers to it only in passing as a sermonic form preserved in Hebrew.[2]

The major scholarly work in English on the Jewish sermon is Israel Bettan's, Studies in Jewish Preaching.[3] The work focuses upon the "essential qualities of the sermon as preached in the Synagogue of the Middle Ages (p. IX)." Bettan pays special tribute to Zunz, crediting his Vortraege as the major source of information on the Jewish sermon so far written. Bettan therefore limits his historical survey of the sermon in general to a brief introductory chapter. The remaining chapters of the book are devoted to the sermons of seven leading Jewish preachers from the thirteenth through the eighteenth centuries. Like Zunz, Bettan fails to discuss the eulogy as an example of sermonic literature. The only reference to the eulogy in his work is an excerpt from an exordium to a funeral sermon delivered by the sixteenth-century preacher Judah Moscato.[4] Bettan presents the excerpt as an example of Moscato's literary style and approach, not as an example of the eulogy as a sermonic form.

Bettan reasons that the traditional sermon (Derasha) originated in the ancient synagogue. He suggests that the sermon grew out of the tradition of translating the reading of Torah into Aramaic, the vernacular of Israel during the period of Ezra-Nehemiah (Nehem. 8:1-8). The Meturgeman, the translator of Scripture, served the vital function of preserving the meaning and force of the Torah in the lives of the congregation. Instruction in the law presupposed an understanding of the law. With the appearance of the Aramaic translation of the Bible, the Targum, the importance of the role of the Meturgeman as translator diminished. Eventually the reading of Torah in the Hebrew original

resumed importance and with it a new functionary was created, the Darshan, the preacher of the law.

The Hebrew terms for sermon, Derasha and for preacher, Darshan, evolve from the root D-R-S which means "to search, expound, interpret." From its inception, the Derasha served as an instrument to revitalize, preserve, and communicate the fundamental truths and meaning of an ancient, poorly understood, sacred text. The Darshan continued the tradition of the Meturgeman by providing the congregation a fresh and imaginative understanding of the Bible.

Of particular interest to the present study is an understanding of the formal properties of the traditional Derasha. It must be remembered that the Derasha was a form that evolved in structure and style throughout the rabbinic and medieval periods. What began as a simple exegetical interpretation of a chosen verse or passage from the weekly Torah portion, evolved into various elaborate systems of interweaving Biblical and rabbinic texts in order to explicate the implied meaning of Scripture. The weekly Torah reading generally served as the foundation upon which to build an exegetical scaffold. The Darshan customarily introduced his sermon with an opening formula. One such formula was a halachic question introduced with the words, Yelammedenu rabbenu (our rabbis teach us). According to Joseph Heinemann, a scholar of ancient Jewish preaching, "the challenge to the preacher was not so much in finding the answer (to the halachic question) — for mostly the questions referred to well known halakhot — but to improvise a way of linking up both the question and the answer with the real subject matter of his sermon, concerned usually with an aggadic interpretation of the Bible reading for the day."[5]

A second sermonic form, found frequently in the old Midrashim, was the proem form. This rhetorical form opened with a scriptural verse, not found in the weekly Torah reading, but generally taken from the Hagiographa (Writings). Heinemann writes:

> Through a series of aggadic interpretations and stories, the quotation was gradually linked up with the first verse of the pericope (or the prophetic lesson) of the day. Often, the preacher intentionally chose a verse which seemed completely unconnected with the weekly portion so as to arouse the curiosity of the audience and increase their interest. Sometimes the connection would be established by means of a play on words or similar rhetorical devices. Nearly always, the opening verse chosen expressed a general idea which was subsequently illustrated by the specific example provided by the contents of the pericope.[6]

An essential characteristic of the traditional Derasha is the manner in which Biblical and rabbinic passages are interwoven in the fabric of the sermon. Often the Darshan would begin his sermon with a scriptural text (proem verse), interpret it in a surprising manner and then immediately continue to treat other scriptural or rabbinic texts. As the sermon unfolded, the Darshan would skillfully demonstrate the relationship between the opening text and the additional texts. He would repeatedly show that the same meaning was hidden within the words of both Scripture and rabbinic texts.[7] Not only was the Darshan able to "entertain" his audience by this homiletical technique, but he also succeeded to use the opening text as a unifying theme throughout the sermon.

The Darshan's significant utilization of Biblical and rabbinic texts reflected his belief that all knowledge and all truth were preserved in the written and oral Torah. Contemporary issues; religious, social, or political, could be resolved only through recourse to the eternal truth of Torah. As interpreter of that truth, the Darshan fortified and validated his instruction to the congregation. His message was not grounded upon personal opinion, it was rather the immutable truth

implied in both scriptural and rabbinic texts. The Darshan was regarded, therefore, not only as a preacher, but also as the disciple of the ancient sages whose exegesis of the Bible was accepted as the one and true interpretation.[8]

As previously stated, the Derasha evolved as a homiletical form throughout the history of Jewish preaching. Undoubtedly it was influenced by contact with various secular rhetorical traditions.[9] For the purpose of this study, it is crucial to examine the Derasha as it evolved, in particular, during the nineteenth century. What were the characteristics of nineteenth-century Jewish preaching? To what extent was this preaching influenced by secular rhetorical traditions of the time?

One of the most important studies of the modern Jewish sermon in the nineteenth century is Alexander Altmann's essay, "The New Style of Preaching in Nineteenth-Century German Jewry."[10] Though Altmann emphasizes Jewish preaching in Germany, he does discuss the sermon as preached in Vienna by Manheimmer and Jellinek. Because these two outstanding preachers were contemporaries of R. Solomon Spitzer in Vienna, Altmann's discussion of their preaching is of particular relevance for this study.

Altmann asserts that the traditional Derasha significantly changed in modern times. He writes:

> The nineteenth century saw the rise and development of a new type of Jewish preaching, replacing the traditional Derasha. The changes involved in this innovation concerned not only the outward form and structure of the sermon, but also its substance. The very concept of the purpose of preaching as well as the ideology behind it underwent a radical transformation.[11]

Altmann argues in his essay that the modern Jewish sermon traces its roots to the Protestant edificatory sermon. Jewish preachers had little choice in what model to follow because, "the traditional Derasha had become repugnant

to current taste and no homiletical manuals comparable to the Christian ones were available."[12] The leading Jewish preachers who Altmann studies were men deeply influenced by the spirit of emancipation. Many of the preachers, like Wolf, Zunz, Geiger, Manheimmer, and Jellinek drew inspiration from the Jewish Haskalah and sought to incorporate the rational, liberal ideologies of the times into their formulation of Judaism.

Beginning in 1808 with the introduction of German language sermons by Joseph Wolf of Dessau, the modern Jewish sermon evolved according to the model of Protestant preaching. The sermon was intended to edify the congregation according to fixed rules of delivery, organization, and style. The sermon must be lucid, clearly organized, and easily understandable. It must arouse the emotions and improve the intellect of the listener. It must appeal to the devotional, spiritual, pious nature of man. It must lead him towards moral behavior and guide him toward proper moral principles.

Clearly the traditional Derasha did not satisfy these requirements. The Derasha was exegetical, weaving numerous strands of Biblical and rabbinic sources into a composite entity. The Derasha addressed several themes at once with no well-defined transitions. It was often convoluted and cumbersome, the antithesis of nineteenth-century German rule—bound preaching (schulgerecht.) David Frankel, a leading Jewish preacher of the period writes:

> It is altogether to be taken for granted that the former manner of preaching ... is nowadays thoroughly useless, nay ... damaging to the holy cause of religion. Those members of the community—their number is legion—who ... are in no way edified by the content and delivery of some sermons ... appear rarely or not at all in the synagogue."[13]

A similar hostility to the traditional Derasha is found in an article written by Rabbi Joseph Morris, a prominent figure in the nineteenth-century British

Jewish community. Morris strongly opposed the pilpulistic means of preaching evidenced in the sermons of many eastern European orthodox rabbis. Morris writes:

> The Polish Maggid may be heard on any Sabbath in the Jewish quarter at the East-end; a glaring instance of the survival of the unfittest. [14]

Regarding the need to accept the modern sermon Morris states:

> It is evident that preaching in the vernacular has become a more wide-spread practice and that the need of making the discourse conform to fixed rules, as regards both treatment and style has grown more imperious ... It has freed itself from the undisciplined methods of Poland, and is now an orderly, coherent production. Nay, more than this, the preacher aims no longer at puzzling and astonishing his hearers. He has ceased to be an oratorical conjurer, a propagander of homiletical conundrums. His sole object is to teach and uplift. [15]

Fundamental to the transformation of the traditional Derasha to the modern Predigt (sermon) was a radically altered religious outlook on the part of many "enlightened" Jews. By using the sermon as an instrument of edification and spiritual uplifting, the modern Jewish preacher accepted the secular notion that religion and religious observance contributed to the elevation of the "state of soul" in man. Religiousity was seen as the attainment of proper devotion and spiritual elevation. The purpose of the sermon was to assist the worshipper in attaining this "feeling of edification" and to "influence his will." [16] The nature of the worship service itself was intended to reflect this virtue of devotion. No longer was it appropriate to pray in shrilling undisciplined tones. Decorum as an ideal was introduced, aided by the presence of organ music and communal hymn singing in German.

Jewish acceptance of this Christian concept of religiousity vividly demonstrates the abandonment of halacha as a total encompassing prescription for the Jew's life. As Altmann writes:

> Piety was no longer conceived of in terms of obedience to the Divine Law as the precondition for the soul's closeness to God; it now stood on its own, drawing its nourishment from the autonomy of moral Reason, the subjectivity of feeling, and the objectivity of the Idea to which the spirit was able to elevate itself.[17]

Not only then was the modern Jewish sermon different in structural design from the traditional Derasha, but its fundamental purpose differed as well. The majority of emancipated Jews living in Germany and Austria required a message different from that of the traditional Derasha. These Jews lacked the requisite technical knowledge of Hebrew sources to understand and appreciate the Derasha. They also followed the Zeitgeist by no longer believing that the Torah was a repository of eternal and immutable truth. Edification rather than instruction became the goal of the modern sermon.

Not all modern Jewish preachers equally accepted the changing focus of the modern sermon. Certain preachers like Bernays in Hamburg and Rapoport in Prague sought to create a modernized form of the Derasha which preserved the richness of traditional sources while relating those sources to the modern world. These preachers recognized that the edificatory sermon had become excessively moralizing and rationalistic in tone. It failed to capture the mind or heart of the listener. Whether the modern Derasha succeeded where the Predigt failed remains a question. In the opinion of a correspondent in Geiger's Zeitschrift, the modern Derasha failed miserably. The correspondent writes that passages chosen from Scripture, Talmud, and Midrash were "subjected to exegesis, etymological analysis, criticism and anatomical dissection of all kind without the audience understanding the least of it. Poor people! ... How I pity them."[18]

Certain preachers did achieve significant popularity and acceptance in their attempt to fuse traditional sources with the edificatory style of preaching.

Foremost among these men were two important figures in the Viennese Jewish community, Isak Noa Manheimmer (1793-1865) and Adolf Jellinek (1820-1893). Though Manheimmer clearly acknowledged his debt to Christian homiletical models, he nevertheless was "the least rule-bound and formalistic among his contemporaries."[19] Commenting on the sermon Manheimmer states: "It is always better to feed on one's own resources than to live from alms, and it is better to cultivate one's own soul than to glean sparingly on foreign ground."[20] Altmann emphasises Manheimmer's use of Talmud and Midrash in the construction of his sermons. He suggests that this practice was so long in disuse by Jewish preachers that Manheimmer received special attention from his contemporaries as a result.[21]

Manheimmer's successor in Vienna was Adolf Jellinek, noted for his original use of Scripture and Midrash in the construction of his sermons. Due to Jellinek's increased use of traditional sources in his sermons he differs radically from his contemporary Jewish preacher, schooled in the Protestant homiletical tradition. And yet, Jellinek was clearly an heir to the Age of Emancipation. His sermons reflect the need for all men, regardless of religion, class, or origin to unite in mutual respect and brotherly love.[22]

In an article entitled, "History of Jewish Preaching With Special Reference to Adolf Jellinek," Harry M. Mayer describes Jellinek's formulation of the sermon. According to Mayer:

> Jellinek's diction is stately but not stilted. His sentences are characteristically German in length, but not diffuse nor involved. His language was generally level with the ear of his audience. His texts are striking and appropriate. It was his custom, according to his pupil, David Leimdorfer, to read his text from the Bible, then close the book and proceed with the sermon. He usually quoted a single sentence from the Scriptures as a motto for the starting point of his discourse, in most cases never alluding to it directly in the body of the sermon. ... He skillfully wove into his discourses biblical

> verses to make a telling climax or to lead up to his theme, giving them invariably in the German vernacular, the Hebrew being supplied in his printed sermons in the foot-notes. [23]

Jellinek's profound understanding of Midrash and Kabbalah enabled him to introduce and expound such texts within the flow of his sermons. As Mayer writes: 'Times without number he elaborates verses from the Bible or sayings or stories of the Midrash in deft paraphrases ascribing new and unintended meanings to the original source. [24]

Jellinek did not use Scripture, Midrash, and Talmud, from a sense of commitment to halachic authority. He viewed his sermons as a means for expressing the noble experiences of the Jewish people. His sermons were designed to elevate the listener, to improve his moral character through an outpouring of Jewish feeling. Jellinek viewed his Jewish heritage as a treasure-house of folk wisdom from which the modern Jew could learn and be inspired to seek truth. Judaism was a vehicle for leading man to perfection, if he but understood its lofty ideals. Jellinek writes in one of his sermons: 'The ladder erected by the Torah to enable man gradually to rise to heaven is the revelation that radiates from Sinai, on whose topmost rung is seen not the figure of a man but God himself, the essence of all that is lofty and pure and true and righteous and He alone is the ideal and the pattern of all our doings and deeds.' [25]

NOTES

CHAPTER II

[1] The work was translated into Hebrew by Hanoch Albeck under the title, ha-Derashot be-Yisrael, Jerusalem, 1947.

[2] Albeck, ha-Derashot, pp. 165, 200, 212.

[3] Israel Bettan, Studies in Jewish Preaching, (Cincinnati: HUC Press, 1939).

[4] Ibid., p. 198.

[5] Joseph Heinemann, "Preaching; Talmudic Period," Encyclopedia Judaica, (1971), XIII, 996.

[6] Ibid., p. 996.

[7] Joseph Dan, "Homiletical Literature; Middle Ages," Encyclopedia Judaica, (1971), VIII, 948.

[8] Ibid., p. 948.

[9] Note Bettan's, Studies in Jewish Preaching, for a review of the Derasha as it was influenced by medieval rhetorical traditions.

[10] Alexander Altmann, "The New Style of Preaching in Nineteenth-Century German Jewry," in, Studies in Nineteenth-Century Jewish Intellectual History, ed. by Alexander Altmann, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964).

[11] Ibid., p. 65.

[12] Ibid., p. 68.

[13] Ibid., p. 102, note # 184.

[14] Joseph Morris, "About Preaching," JQR, (1891), 3:124.

[15] Ibid., p. 131.

[16] Altmann, Studies, p. 115.

NOTES

CHAPTER II (continued)

[17] Ibid., p. 115.

[18] Ibid., p. 78.

[19] Ibid., p. 71.

[20] Ibid., p. 79.

[21] Ibid., p. 80.

[22] Adolf Jellinek, "Limudai ha-Dat ha-Yahadut," in Pninim Midrashot D'Rabbi Yellinek, trans. by A. B. Guttelauber, (Vilna, 1929), pp. 5-22.

[23] Harry H. Mayer, "History of Jewish Preaching With Special Reference to Adolf Jellinek," CCAR Year Book, (1921), 31:162-163.

[24] Ibid., p. 163.

[25] Ibid., p. 165.

CHAPTER III

RABBI SOLOMON SPITZER AND THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF VIENNA

A review of the life and work of R. Solomon Spitzer will complete the necessary perspective for viewing the collection of his eulogies in Tikkun Shelomo. Though Spitzer has not been the object of serious historical investigation, some details of his life have been preserved.[1] He was born in Ofen (now Budapest) in 1826 to R. Loeb Spitz, a Dayyan of the community. Spitzer moved to Pressburg to study under the Ketav Sofer, R. Abraham Sofer (Hatam Sofer's oldest son). Later, Spitzer traveled to near-by Vergin to study in the yeshiva of R. Moses (Maharam) Schick. In 1849 he married the daughter of Hatam Sofer, which brought him into one of the most influential orthodox families in eastern Europe.

In 1853, at the age of twenty-seven, Spitzer accepted the position of rabbi for Vienna's Pressburger Schul, a small orthodox community of Hungarian Jews, mainly from the city of Pressburg. Spitzer was recommended for the position by Ignaz Deutsch, an active leader of Austrian orthodoxy whose native city was Pressburg. For the next forty years until his death, on December 5, 1893, Spitzer served as leader of the Hungarian orthodox community in Vienna.

For the greater part of the nineteenth century the Jewish community of Vienna was highly diversified in religious ideology. This is a crucial point in understanding the polemical nature of Spitzer's activity in Vienna. The first legally sanctioned synagogue in the community since 1671 was created in 1826, under the leadership of Isak Noa Manheimmer. According to Max Grunwald in his work, Vienna, Manheimmer "had an unusual faculty for mediating between the most divergent people, who represented the conflict between the old and the

new. That is why he became the soul of the Jewish community in Vienna in the first half of the nineteenth century."[2] Manheimmer began his work at the Seitenstettengasse Synagogue with the title, "Religious Teacher and Preacher," because the state refused to officially recognize the Jewish community or the rabbinate until after the 1848 revolution. Manheimmer's efforts to preserve a unified Jewish community set the tone for his religious leadership. He worked closely with Lazar Horwitz, the early representative of Hungarian orthodoxy in Vienna. Horwitz, a student of Hatam Sofer and a strict halachist, shared Manheimmer's view concerning the reconciliation of contending factions in Vienna. According to Grunwald, Horwitz "advised Manheimmer in the compilation of by-laws of the Temple," and "guided Manheimmer in all questions of ritual." Grunwald continues, "True he obtained the consent of Moses Sofer to work hand in hand with Manheimmer. He performed an important service when the placed the unity of the congregation above every other consideration. He showed none of the intolerance of orthodoxy of a later period."[3]

Manheimmer did introduce numerous changes into the synagogue service. He translated the prayer book into German and re-arranged the liturgy of the High Holiday services. It will be recalled (see Chapter II) that Manheimmer also adopted, in part, the spirit of Protestant preaching, acknowledging his indebtedness to Christian "masters of the art."[4] He nevertheless rejected radical reform measures to eliminate Hebrew from the service, to exclude messianic passages in the prayer book, and to introduce organ music into the service.[5]

Significant changes occurred during the second half of the nineteenth century which tended to upset the balance of religious compromise forged by Manheimmer and Horwitz. A crucial development was the rapid increase in Jewish population in Vienna between 1830 to 1900, due partly to the repeal, in

1848, of the law restricting Jewish residence in the city and partly to waves of immigrants coming to Vienna from Galicia which was annexed by Austria during the century. A look at population figures illustrates the point. In 1800 there were 1,200 Jews living in Vienna; by 1856 the number had increased to nearly 16,000; by 1869 over 40,000; by 1880 over 72,000; and by 1900 the figure totals close to 150,000.[6] During the forty years in which Spitzer worked in Vienna, the Jewish population increased by over 100,000 people!

It is difficult to determine how this population increase specifically influenced the Jewish community in Vienna. Many questions arise for the historian to investigate: to what extent were these immigrants welcomed by the Vienna community?; to what extent did this influx of people alter the religious balance established in the early part of the century?; to what extent did the Jewish community become more politically potent as a result of their increased number? The eulogies of R. Solomon Spitzer must be read in light of this significant historical development.

A second phenomenon influencing the development of the Viennese Jewish community during the latter 1800's was the intensification of attitudes based on the Jewish Haskalah.

Strengthened by liberal sentiments emerging from the 1848 revolution, Jewish reformers gained in popularity and governmental recognition. Vienna was a center of the Reform and Haskalah movements during this period. Men like Isaac Letteris, Anton Schmid, Max Stern, and Hermann Landau eagerly developed Vienna's role as literary capital of European Haskalah. Intellectuals such as Frankl, Hartman, and Kuranda emerged as social and political leaders of Viennese liberal Jewry. Many reformers such as Simon Szanto and Ignaz

Kuranda wished to introduce radical reforms into the order of the worship service, including: "the elimination of all mention of an ultimate return to Zion and Jerusalem, and the exclusion from the prayer books of all references to the reinstitution of sacrifices and to a belief in the Messiah."[7]

Mention must also be made of early Zionist inroads, which further divided the Jewish community in Vienna. From 1865 to 1885, Peretz Smolenskin published ha Shachar in Vienna. Nathan Birnbaum founded in Vienna the first Jewish nationalist student organization, Kadimah, in 1882. Though Zionists were not a majority among the Jewish community until the early 1900's, their influence was already felt in Vienna during the later 1800's.

In the religious sphere, the changing nature of Viennese Jewry can be seen in the leadership of Adolf Jellinek, who succeeded Manheimmer as rabbi at the Seitenstetten Synagogue in 1864. Jellinek had come to Vienna from Leipzig in 1856, where he was appointed preacher at the newly created Leopoldstadt Synagogue. His fame as orator has already been discussed in Chapter I. According to Grunwald, Jellinek's "attitude in religious matters betrayed leanings toward reform. It reflected the liberal tendencies of his time, whose watchword was "Progress," and whose key-note was anti-clericalism."[8] Though highly influenced by Manheimmer to preserve unity in the community, he nevertheless encouraged a more liberal expression of Judaism than did his predecessor. It was only Manheimmer's personal advice which kept Jellinek from introducing the organ in the synagogue "to attract the indifferent."[9] Jellinek's interest in defending the respectability of Jewish traditions in the modern age led to his establishment of the Beit ha-Midrash Academy in 1862. Public lectures were given at the academy by Jellinek and other leading figures to raise the scholarly level of the study of Judaism.

An additional key religious personality in the Vienna Jewish community was R. Moritz Gudemann, appointed in 1866 by the community to help fill the loss created by Manheimmer's death. Gudemann was an active supporter of community unity, though in religious expression he was more conservative than Jellinek. In 1892 Gudemann was made Chief Rabbi; the first time such a title was used in Vienna.[10]

This was the nature of the Viennese Jewish community when R. Solomon Spitzer began his leadership of Hungarian orthodoxy in the city. Spitzer carried with him to Vienna the spirit, if not the principles of his influential teacher, R. Moses Schick. Interestingly, Schick himself at the age of fourteen, studied in Pressburg with R. Moses Sofer, Spitzer's father-in-law. The religious tradition in which Spitzer was trained was thus the product of a very well defined and selective religious outlook. Both Hatam Sofer and Maharam Schick were exemplars of orthodoxy in ritual observance and philosophical understanding. Both intensely fought the spread of reform and argued for complete separation of the orthodox and reform communities in their respective cities. In a responsum, Schick outlined the details of reform proposals in order to demonstrate how dangerous reformers were to the foundation of Judaism.[11] In another responsum, Schick applauded the efforts of Samson Rafael Hirsch in clearly separating from reform doctrines and advocating a solid, though modern, orthodox position.[12] Schick himself was apparently moved to make certain changes when he agreed to permit preaching in the vernacular, yet only by a Talmid Hacham.[13]

Yekutiel Greenwald, writing on the rise of reform in Germany and Hungary, notes aspects of the relationship between Schick and his student Spitzer.[14] Schick is quoted to have said that "had Spitzer not gone to the 'dirty' city of Vienna, but stayed in Hungary and taught students there, he would have excelled more."[15]

In 1874, however, when Spitzer was asked to leave his duties in Vienna to become rabbi in Mattersdorf, Schick urged him to remain, saying, "a conscientious general does not leave his soldiers to fight on by themselves."[16]

Indeed the imagery of warfare seems to aptly describe the activity of R. Spitzer during his life in Vienna. Spitzer's leadership of the Pressburger Schul was so effective that in 1864 a new synagogue, Adass Yisroel, was built in Grosse Schiffgasse and known as the Schiff Schul. Spitzer's desire to teach orthodox Judaism, which he repeatedly calls "Torah-True Judaism," led him to establish the Schiff Schul Beit ha-Midrash. Spitzer was active in the political organization of the Jewish community as well. He served as a member of the Kultusgemeinde, the officially recognized communal organ of Viennese Jewry. In 1871, while a member of the organization, he battled attempts by Jellinek and Kuranda to introduce radical reforms into synagogue services.[17] According to Schalit, these progressives wanted to eliminate from the liturgy all mention of return to Zion, of the sacrificial system, and of belief in the Messiah. To counter this attempt, Spitzer organized a protest meeting of nearly 500 orthodox Viennese, approximately one quarter of Vienna's total synagogue membership. Schalit states that a compromise was reached whereby "the reforms were called modifications, the organ was not introduced into any Vienna synagogue, and the controversial prayers were to be recited in silence by the congregation."[18]

Apparently in regard to the same battle, Greenwald comments that "it once happened that when the 'Freeones' wanted to change the order of prayer and omit references to Zion and Jerusalem, Spitzer went up on the bimah with a Torah in hand and cried: 'Cursed be the man who does not uphold the words of the Torah.' He threatened them that he would leave his position as Dayyan; then they listened to him."[19]

On various occasions Spitzer's intense controversy with liberal elements in the Jewish community had decisive results. In 1868, upon the death of Lazar Horwitz, Spitzer was offered his vacant position upon the condition that he modify his strictly traditional standards. He refused to do so. A few years later, after the controversy over the liturgy, Spitzer resigned his seat on the Kultusgemeinde to devote his total energies to the Schiff Schul, and to its Beit ha-Midrash. Apparently Spitzer was under some pressure from traditionalists in the community to leave the Kultusgemeinde. Greenwald quotes an article written by R. Yitzchak Raych, a strict orthodox Jew, in the newspaper, Shevet Achim, in which Raych says: "Why doesn't he (Spitzer) leave the Beit Din (apparently the traditional term used for Kultusgemeinde) because it isn't seemly for the son-in-law of Hatam Sofer to sit in the Beit Din under R. Gudemann."[20]

Throughout his life Spitzer was a religious lover of Zion (but not a "Zionist") and it was his desire to one day settle in Jerusalem. Spitzer even sent his library on to Jerusalem in anticipation of joining his son-in-law who had previously migrated there.[21]

Spitzer died before realizing his goal, and was buried, as he requested, in Pressburg. It is interesting to note that Spitzer neither chose to have his remains sent to Jerusalem nor to be buried in Vienna, his home for the last forty years of his life. Unquestionably the city of Pressburg, home of his wife and, of course, Hatam Sofer, remained paramount in Spitzer's life. In one of his eulogies, Spitzer even refers to Pressburg as the "little Jerusalem."[22]

After his death, Spitzer's son-in-law, Joseph Baer Kohen, published a collection of Spitzer's sermons, Talmudic treatises (under the separate title, Simlat Binyamin) and funeral orations in a work entitled Tikkun Shelomo.

The funeral addresses preserved in this text will be discussed below.

NOTES

CHAPTER III

[1] Peter Wiernick, "Benjamin Solomon Spitzer," The Jewish Encyclopedia, (1901), XI, 524. Abraham Schalit, "Solomon Spitzer," Encyclopedia Judaica, (1971), XV, 287-288. These are the only specific treatments on Spitzer in English.

[2] Max Grunwald, Vienna, (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1936), p. 344.

[3] Ibid., p. 376.

[4] Altmann, Studies. p. 71.

[5] Grunwald, Vienna, p. 376.

[6] "Vienna," The Jewish Encyclopedia, (1901), XII, 437.

[7] Schalit, "Solomon Spitzer," p. 287.

[8] Grunwald, Vienna, p. 364.

[9] "Adolf Jellinek," Encyclopedia Judaica, (1971), IX, 1338.

[10] Josef Fraenkel, "The Chief Rabbi and the Visionary," in The Jews in Austria, ed. by Josef Fraenkel, (London: Vallentine-Mitchell, 1967), pp. 113-114.

[11] Orech Chayim, 309.

[12] Orech Chayim, 306.

[13] Orech Chayim, 70.

[14] Yekutiel Greenwald, Letoledot ha-Reformazyon ha-Dadit be Germanya u-ve-Ungarya (1948), p. 14, n. 25.

[15] Ibid., p. 14, n. 25.

[16] Schalit, "Solomon Spitzer," p. 288.

NOTES

CHAPTER III (continued)

[17] Ibid., p. 287.

[18] Ibid., p. 287.

[19] Greenwald, Letoledot, p. 14, n. 25.

[20] Ibid., p. 14, n. 25.

[21] Schalit, "Solomon Spitzer," p. 288.

[22] Solomon Spitzer, HeSPeD "Two," in Tikkun Shelomo, (Vienna, 1892), p. 98.

CHAPTER IV

THE PERSONS EULOGIZED AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO SPITZER

The eulogies to be examined in this study provide historical insight into the lives of prominent orthodox Jewish figures of the nineteenth century. Understanding of the eulogies requires appreciation of the careers of the persons who are eulogized and of Solomon Spitzer's relationship with these eminent men. Two important questions to be asked when studying these eulogies as sermonic forms are: Why did Spitzer choose to eulogize these particular individuals?; and why were these eulogies selected for publication in Tikkun Shelomo? The discussion to follow will attempt to answer these questions.

Certain information concerning the occasion of the funeral address is presented at the beginning of each eulogy in the collection.[1] This introductory statement provides some or all of the following information: the name (or names in cases where more than one individual is remembered) of the departed; the date of death, burial, and eulogy; the home town and place of burial of the departed; the name of the weekly Torah reading; and a brief petitionary prayer beseeching God to comfort the mourners. Four personalities eulogized by Spitzer will now be individually discussed.

HESPED TWO (Beit)

> Delivered for R. Abraham Samuel Benjamin Wolf Sofer, on Sunday, the eleventh of Shevet, 1872. Torah portion: B'Shallach (Ex. 13:17 - 17:16).

This is the third eulogy Spitzer delivered on the deceased. He gave the first at the burial in Sofer's community of Pressburg, on Tuesday, the twenty-first day of Tevet, 1872, scriptural reading: Shemot (Ex. 1:1 - 6:1). The second eulogy was delivered the following Sunday in the major synagogue of the city, scriptural reading: Va-ayra (Ex. 6:2 - 9:35). The present eulogy was delivered in Vienna.

R. Abraham Sofer, born in 1815, was known as the Ketav Sofer. He was the brother-in-law of R. Solomon Spi'zer. As a youth Spitzer studied under Sofer in the latter's yeshiva in Pressburg. A number of responses in Sofer's work, Ketav Sofer, are addressed to R. Spitzer. Sofer was the oldest son of R. Moses (Hatam) Sofer, and succeeded his father on his death in 1839 as rabbi and rosh yeshivah of Pressburg. For the remaining 33 years of his life he occupied this position and actively continued his father's policies. During Sofer's latter years he became an extreme opponent of liberal elements in Hungarian Jewry.[2]

In his address Spitzer describes Sofer as "the Glory of all Israel" and as "the Ark of the Lord." Sofer's diligence in the study and love of Torah is repeatedly celebrated. He is praised as one who "rends the mountains and breaks rocks in pieces (K.I. 19:11) in his intricate interpretation (pilpul) of Torah."

Spitzer acknowledges his profound love for Sofer, stating: "My friends, I was his student who served him faithfully for many years. I am the man who saw all his holy ways and I know how obligated he felt to lead his people in God's ways."

HESPED SIX (Vav)

Delivered for R. Simeon Sofer, on Thursday,
the twenty-seventh of Adar II, 1883.[3]

Spitzer records that Sofer died on Monday, the seventeenth of Adar II in Cracow. The eulogy, delivered in Vienna, thus followed Sofer's death by ten days.[4] Spitzer indicates that the eulogy was delivered after the observance of

Yom Kippur ha-Katan, the minor Day of Atonement. This observance was initiated sometime during the sixteenth century as a one-day fast prior to each new moon. It is recorded in Shnei Luhot ha-Brit (120b, 140a, 179a) that since the new moon (Rosh Hodesh) serves as an atonement, man must repent on the advent of the new moon.[5] (The relationship between death and atonement has previously been discussed in Chapter I. The manner in which Spitzer integrates the concept of atonement into his eulogies will be shown in Chapter V).

R. Simeon Sofer, born in 1820, was the second and youngest son of R. Moses (Hatam) Sofer, and the brother-in-law of R. Solomon Spitzer. He was appointed Rabbi of Mattersdorf in 1848. In 1861, he moved to Cracow and was rabbi there until his death in 1883. Sofer was the foremost leader of the orthodox Jews in Galicia, serving as a member of the Austrian Parliament from 1878.

Sofer's interest in uniting the Austrian orthodox community led to political action in 1878 with the founding of the Preservers of Religion (Mahzike ha-Das) society in Lvov. The organization, headed by Sofer, represented the first attempt by orthodox leaders to unite in opposition to the enlighteners (maskilim). A large conference which was attended by 200 rabbis and 800 representatives of communities was convened by the organization in 1882. The purpose of the conference was to protect the communities from tendencies towards religious reform. The conference passed a resolution that only Jews who observed the precepts of the Shulchan Aruch were to be granted full voting rights for communal elections.[6]

Spitzer does not indicate having enjoyed a personal relationship with Sofer. He does record in his eulogy that Sofer was the object of much criticism levied by unnamed "enemies of Israel." Sofer was charged as being hostile to his people's freedom and in favor of their continued oppression in the diaspora (galut.) Spitzer denies the validity of this criticism, and remarks that Sofer was a great lover of his

people. Spitzer's comments on this matter are presented in full in the next chapter.

HESPED SEVEN (Zayin)

Delivered for Sir Moses Montefiore. Torah portion: Nitzavim (Deut. 29:9 - 30:20).

The only date Spitzer records in the introductory statement is the year 1870. This must be seen as an error in transcription because Montefiore died on July 25, 1885.

It is clear from this eulogy that Spitzer never met Montefiore personally. He does mention reading several letters Montefiore had sent to Hungarian Jewish communities in which he emphasized his willingness to be of help whenever he could. Spitzer describes Montefiore as a "giant of men" (he was 6 feet 3 inches tall) and as "a man who bestowed love and beneficience upon his people throughout the world." Though Spitzer naturally praises Montefiore's philanthropy and political activity on behalf of the Jews, he especially emphasizes Montefiore's devout religious behavior. Montefiore's "sanctification of God's name" is celebrated as his most outstanding virtue. Spitzer writes: "He (Montefiore) sanctified God's name in public by dedicating his soul, throughout his dangerous travels, to the glory of God." (Montefiore always traveled with his personal kosher butcher.) Spitzer clearly interprets all of Montefiore's great deeds as reflecting a motivation to honor God.

HESPED EIGHT (Chet)

Delivered for Samson Rafael Hirsch, Moses Pollack and Joel Deutsch. Torah portion: Terumah (Ex. 25:2 - 27:19).

Although Spitzer includes the names of three orthodox figures in his introductory statement, he focuses in the eulogy exclusively upon Hirsch. [7] No mention is

made in the introduction of the dates of death or the date of the eulogy. Hirsch died on December 31, 1888; Pollack in 1888; and Deutsch on May 1, 1889. Furthermore, both Hirsch and Pollack were eulogized by others during the year 1889.[8] Based on these dates, this eulogy was the last to be delivered among the collection in Tikkun Shelomo.

Samson Raphael Hirsch exerted a profound influence upon the orthodox world of the nineteenth century. He was educated in the enlightened orthodoxy of Jacob Ettlinger and Isaac Bernays. Hirsch's active role in transforming the principles of orthodoxy to better complement the modern, emancipated Jew undoubtedly impressed the ultra-orthodox Spitzer. In Hirsch, Spitzer found a "Torah-true Jew," a Jew committed to the statutes of Torah and love of God who was also no stranger to the secular world. Though Hirsch devoted the last 37 years of his life to the orthodox community in Frankfurt, his influence nevertheless spread throughout the Jewish world.

It is most likely that Spitzer never met Hirsch, although he states in his eulogy that he read two of Hirsch's influential works: the Nineteen Letters and Horev.[9] Both books, according to Spitzer, transform the reader into a "new person" who emerges with an intensified appreciation of Judaism and devotion to God. Spitzer praises Hirsch as a "fighter of God's War" against heretics who seek to destroy the pillars of Judaism. Hirsch's role as an educator of youth is celebrated as well. According to Spitzer, Hirsch had the talent of presenting complicated truths of Torah in a clear and understandable way. Spitzer's praise of this virtue is recorded in the following chapter.

These four personalities, although different in many ways, represented for Spitzer Jewish leaders who had dedicated their lives to preserve Orthodox Judaism. Abraham and Simeon Sofer clearly exemplified the orthodox tradition in which

Spitzer was schooled. They represented the presence of Hatam Sofer in contemporary Jewish affairs. Montefiore and Hirsch represented two modern Jews who successfully combined a participation in the secular world with a faithful commitment to Judaism. Each of the four men, in his own right, fought against what Spitzer interpreted as the movement towards sectarianism and assimilation.

Spitzer clearly uses these personalities as support for his instruction to the congregation. Throughout his career in Vienna Spitzer battled attempts by the reformers to undermine traditional orthodoxy (see Chapter III). He repeatedly charged that their adaptations to the secular world were heretical and would lead to the demise of Judaism. Spitzer contrasted such adaptations with the examples of the men he eulogized. They became the examples of the modern, faithful, orthodox Jew.

Of particular relevance for this study is the fact that Spitzer chose to continue, within the context of the funeral address, his polemic disputation with liberal elements of the Jewish community. Spitzer perceived the eulogy, therefore, as a vehicle for transmitting instruction on pressing political and religious issues of the day. It was an important sermonic form, worth preserving and being made available as a source of instruction for preacher and layman alike.

The eulogy, therefore, was seized by Spitzer as a sermonic instrument to further the aims of a battling orthodox rabbinate. This use of the eulogy seems at variance to its formulation in legal literature. The questions arise: How did Spitzer, as a eulogist bound to halacha, fulfill in the eulogy ritual prescriptions governing the formulation of the HeSPeD?; How did Spitzer relate the occasion of death and mourning to his attack on the reformers?; To what extent did Spitzer combine his words of comfort to the mourners with words of appeal for them to battle liberal Judaism? It is to these questions that the study will now turn.

NOTES

CHAPTER IV

[1] Each eulogy in the collection is numbered from Alef (one) to Chet (eight). The text is printed in Rashi script, exclusive of the first word of each paragraph which is printed in bold-faced Hebrew. Quotations from Biblical, Talmudic, and Midrashic literature are not distinguished from the text of the eulogy, and generally appear without source reference.

[2] Maurice Samuels, "Sofer (Schreiber)," Encyclopedia Judaica, (1971), XV, 75-76.

[3] Spitzer indicates later in the eulogy that the congregation must remember three additional figures who have recently died. They are: Mordechai Barda, Moshe Hef, and Aaron Zinger.

[4] The fact that the eulogy was delivered ten days after death is a point Spitzer develops later in the eulogy. Note discussion on this in Chapter V.

[5] Hayyim Schauss, Guide to Jewish Holy Days, (New York: Schocken Books, 1938), p. 275.

[6] Avraham Rubinstein, "Mahzike Hadas," The Encyclopedia Judaica, (1971), II, 730-731.

[7] Moses Pollack (1845-1888) was a student under R. Abraham Sofer. He established his own yeshivah in Bonyhad, Hungary. Joel Deutsch (1813-1899) came to Vienna in 1852 as the Director of an institute for deaf-mutes. He was a student of rabbinic literature throughout his life.

[8] Bernhard Wachstein, Maftaoh, pp. 57, 44.

[9] The "Letters" have been translated into Hebrew and English: M. S. Aronson, "Iggerot Zafon," (Wilna, 1892). Bernard Drachman, The Nineteen Letters of Ben Uziel, (New York, 1899). Horev, trans. by I. Grunfeld, (London: Soncino Press, 1962).

CHAPTER V

THEMES ADDRESSED IN THE EULOGIES

Spitzer's challenge in formulating his eulogies was to combine the polemic sermon with the ritual observance to eulogize the dead. The occasion of death demanded that Spitzer address particular themes. It was incumbent upon him, as it was upon any eulogist: to interpret the meaning of death; to examine the life of the departed; to console the mourners and reassure them in the continuation of leadership; and to provide them with an historical understanding of Judaism in order to renew their faith in the authority of God and of Torah. Spitzer's ultimate task was to relate these themes to the larger context of the struggle to preserve orthodox hegemony threatened by rising sectarianism and assimilation. The congregation must understand the connection between the present occasion of death and the challenges they confronted in the world around them.

The discussion to follow will demonstrate how Spitzer addressed these themes in order to realize his goal. Each theme will be examined separately and will be illustrated by selected passages from the eulogies. In addition, eulogy number six will be reviewed in total. This particular eulogy most vividly illustrates Spitzer's technique in relating together all the themes within the flow of the eulogy.

*

Spitzer's interpretation of the meaning of death most fundamentally establishes the connection between the funeral service and the larger historical context in which he preached. According to Spitzer, the death of the righteous was due to the sinful nature of the people. Death was the result of the sin of the congregation.

In this respect Spitzer was echoing the conception of death as formulated in the Bible and in the Talmud (cf. Lev. 10:6, Shab. 106a). Spitzer amplified this traditional conception of death by specifying the nature of the present sin. The sin which resulted in the death of the contemporary figure was the congregation's loss of faith in God and in Torah. Orthodox Jews were desecrating the Sabbath and mocking the dietary laws. Secular knowledge was replacing the Torah as repository of external truth. Spitzer writes:

"During the illness of the Ketav Sofer I went to Pressburg to visit my teacher. I went hopeful that the tears, prayers, and righteousness which the congregation offered to God on Sofer's behalf would speed his recovery. I went with great hope but God returned me empty-handed because of the many sins of the congregation. Our prayer was not acceptable before God. 'The joy of our heart is ceased; our dance is turned into mourning. The crown is fallen from our head, woe unto us that we have sinned (Lam. 5:15, 16).'"[1]

Spitzer also interpreted the death of the righteous as a sacrifice offered by the congregation to atone for their sins. In order for their sacrifice to be acceptable before God, the congregation must thoroughly examine their evil ways and return, in complete repentance, to God's commandments. Spitzer capitalized upon the concept of repentance in order to urge his congregation to reject the teachings of liberal Judaism. Even though the righteous man died due to their sins, the promise of Divine forgiveness was extended to the congregation if they acknowledged their wrongdoing and returned to the observance of God's law.

"The sages expounded in Pesikta Zutra, Acharai 166: Why is the death of the righteous (the death of Aaron's sons, cf. Lev. 16:1) recorded in Scripture in close proximity to the discussion of Yom ha-Kippur (cf Lev. 16:29)? It comes to teach that just as Yom ha-Kippur atones for sins, so too does the death of the righteous atone for sins. The sages, however, have already taught this principle by relating the death of Miriam (cf. Nu. 20:1) to the Red Heifer (cf. Nu. 19).[2] Why then do the sages repeat themselves? An answer is suggested by Hatam Sofer, my beloved teacher, who expounded: the ritual offering of the Red Heifer is a community atonement (cf. Lev. 16:9). In contrast to this, Yom ha-Kippur serves as an atonement for each individual Jew. Now it is known to all that the death of the righteous, like the Red Heifer, atones for the entire community. It will also, however, atone for each individual of the community, like Yom ha-Kippur, if he is truly affected by the death of the righteous: if he carefully examines his behavior, mourns in the proper way by shedding tears and, through this, returns to obey ever-more faithfully God's Torah. This procedure was thoroughly followed by the Israelites upon the death of Aaron's sons, thus their death is likened unto Yom ha-Kippur.[3] Concerning Miriam's death however, the Israelites failed to mourn properly and thus her death is likened only to the Red Heifer which atones for the congregation but not for each individual.[4] This is the instruction which we as a congregation must take to heart. We must understand that our great loss is due to our own sins and we must therefore shed tears and repent. From now on we must strengthen ourselves in God's Torah so that our loss may be an atonement similar to Yom ha-Kippur."[5]

Fundamental to Spitzer's conception that death serves as an atonement for sin was the need for the congregation to properly mourn the death. Spitzer

therefore instructs his congregation to wail and shed tears over the death of the righteous. The shedding of tears is defined as the proper manner to mourn death. The practice of shedding tears in mourning has previously been examined in Chapter I. The Shulchan Aruch instructs the eulogist to increase the flow of the mourner's tears (Yoreh Deah 344:1). The need to shed tears is thus an halachic prescription which Spitzer incorporated into the formulation of his eulogies. In order to fully repent and seek forgiveness from God the congregation must cry and shed tears.[6]

"We must now lament and shed tears for it is written: 'And the entire congregation of Israel shall shed tears over God's burning destruction (Lev. 10:6).' And if our sages counselled us: 'Anyone who sheds tears over a worthy man, God counts and places them in his storehouse (Shab. 105b),' then how much the more must we wail over the great leaders of Israel. Because of our great sins we must shed rivers of tears and offer them to God, who also sheds tears over us and over our sins. Have we not been instructed to cry over the destruction of God's Temple? If so then we surely must cry over the death of the righteous, for it is written: 'Greater is the death of the righteous than the destruction of God's Temple (R. H. 186.)' "[7]

"It is written in the Book of Psalms: 'Those who plant with a tear shall reap in gladness (Ps. 126:5).' From this we must learn that those who shed tears over the death of the righteous will reap in gladness atonement for all sins. May it be Your will, O Lord, that all the tears shed today before You become our seeds in Your storehouse. May You preserve them for our future benefit, that when Your storehouse is opened we may reap them in gladness. Make us worthy heirs to the righteous, in whose honor we have gathered,

and bless us with the bounty of Your goodness. May our lives be full and may we be worthy of complete redemption in the land of Israel."[8]

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A second theme which Spitzer addressed in his eulogies was the lesson to be learned by closely examining the life of the departed. It has been shown in the previous chapter that Spitzer used the life of the deceased as an example of the modern orthodox faithful Jew. This explanation of the departed's life also integrally relates to Spitzer's interpretation of the meaning of death. The righteous man died due to the sins of the people. The people sinned when they modeled their behavior upon the teachings of heretical reformers. They were led astray by deceivers who preached that truth and knowledge could be found in the study of science and not in the study of Torah.

Spitzer instructed his congregation to repent of this sin by emulating the virtues of the departed. The life of the departed was the example of true devotion to God and to Torah. The departed represented the exemplarly Jew because he too emulated the noble virtues of past Jewish heroes. Spitzer repeatedly demonstrated that the departed represented in his generation the attributes which the great ancient sages represented in their own generation. Montefiore bestowed goodness upon his people, due to the example of Abraham, who bestowed goodness upon the ancient Jews.

By instructing his people to emulate the virtues of the deceased, Spitzer united the present congregation with the ancestors of their heritage. When the people repudiate the life of the deceased by following the example of the reformers, they essentially repudiate the very foundation of their Jewish heritage.

'My friends, we see that our beloved sage (R. Abraham Sofer) merits the appelation 'The Ark of the Lord' due to his great love and study of Torah. He fulfilled the meaning of the verse, 'This is the law (Torah) when a man dies in a tent (Nu. 19:14).' [According to Shab. 83b, a man should study Torah even at the time of his death.] We know that for most of his life Sofer was ill and doctors ordered him not to study ... But he refused to live his life without Torah and continued to study throughout the night, sleeping three or four hours at the most. In addition he raised up thousands of students, many of whom are Geonim, and hundreds who now teach Torah. His wisdom guided him in upright behavior as well. He could not listen to a slanderous word concerning any man, and would always say: 'Do not judge your neighbor until you stand in his place (Avot 2:4).'"[9]

'We find in the prophetic portion for the week (Nitzavim: Is. 61:10-63:9) a precise description of the character of our great sage [Moses Montefiore]. It is written: 'Surely they are my people, children that will not lie, so he was their savior. In all their affliction he was afflicted and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them, and he bore them and carried them all the days of old (Is. 63:8,9).' It is known that Montefiore performed great deeds on behalf of his people. Many times he traveled great distances, mindless of the danger or expense involved. Nothing was too difficult for him to do if he heard that his brothers were in distress. God went with him as he met with Kings and Princes and performed wonderous deeds for his people. After receiving the thanks of the people he would respond in letters, which I myself have read, that it was his responsibility to help. Furthermore, he wrote that he was sure any Jew would do the same if only he had the wealth and oppor-

tunity. In this respect the deceased resembled Moses our Teacher, about whom Scripture states: 'And the man Moses was the most humble of men on the face of the land (Nu. 12:3).' We must understand that this virtue does not merely indicate the simple notion that Moses was not haughty, it indicates rather Moses' unique capacity to lower himself in his own eyes. Moses attributes all his greatness and selection by God to the merit of his father, Amram, and all his wisdom and righteous deeds were excelled, in his view, by other men in Israel. We find this virtue of humility in the departed, Moses Montefiore. But even more praiseworthy than the virtue itself, was the example of Montefiore's humility to inspire others to act righteously.' We come to understand our great loss in Montefiore's death by comparing his virtue of goodness to the beneficience of Abraham our Teacher. Concerning Abraham's struggle with God to save the lives of the evil ones of Sodom and Gomorrah, we ask: Why did Scripture preserve this story if, in fact, Abraham was not successful in his plea? It would have been understandable if Scripture had sung the praises of the righteous because they could annul God's decree, but Abraham failed. Why then should we pay tribute to his failure? The answer is seen in the fact that Abraham represented the source of loving kindness in the world. God realized that in the future all the world would regard Abraham as a model from whom to learn goodness and loving kindness (Gen. 18:17-19). Abraham might have rejoiced, however, over God's punishment of the evil-doers for that would have aided his attempt to teach others to be good and God-fearing people. Instead, Abraham refused to be happy over another man's misfortune. This virtue is rooted in the foundation of the Jewish religion. It is such a vital aspect of the Jewish heritage, that Scripture, realizing Abraham's destiny to command others, sought to implant this virtue in Abraham's exemplary character.

"This is the virtue of goodness which we find in Moses Montefiore. Like Abraham, Montefiore bestowed loving kindness on all men; whether believer or not, whether Jew or not. We also must remember that Montefiore was a firm believer in God, a believer of Torah, and stringent in following all the commandments of the sages. Never did he travel without his own personal Shochet. Compare this behavior to that of many Jews who mock the laws and customs of our heritage. It is our own people, not the non-Jew, who reject our laws as unseemly and outdated. We must learn from the model of Montefiore that Judaism is still a viable and vital way of life."[10]

"It is written in our weekly Torah reading (Terumah): 'And God spoke to Moses saying: Speak to the children of Israel that they bring me an offering; of every man that gives it willingly from his heart shall you take My offering (Ex. 25:1,2).' 'And they shall make me a sanctuary (Mikdash) and I will dwell among them (Ex. 25:8).' We must understand from this last verse that each and every righteous man establishes God's sanctuary through himself. He becomes God's sanctuary on earth. We further learn that God dwells within the righteous Jew as He would within his own sanctuary. This attribute of the righteous represents their ultimate achievement in Judaism. We find proof for this by understanding the principle behind the progression of the first eight Torah portions in the Book of Exodus. These eight portions follow the history of the Israelites from their enslavement in Egypt and subsequent redemption, to their reception of the Torah and commandments, and culminating in the establishment of the sanctuary. The essence of Judaism is that in every generation the Israelites face the opposition of an 'Egypt;' in every generation Jews have had to progress from slavery to the establishment of a sanctuary to God.

To be reminded of this progression of history and that God continually redeems our people the sages have directed us to fast and seek repentence during the days of these weekly readings.[11] Through repentance the righteous renews his faith in God and Torah and becomes sanctified unto himself—he becomes God's sanctuary on earth, where God himself dwells. We further learn that the righteous become God's sanctuary from the episode of Moses who asks of God, before the establishment of the Mikdash or the Mishcan, 'What will be the sanctuary for the people?' God replies, 'I will take from among the righteous and they will establish themselves (mit-mash-che-nim) as a sanctuary for the people.'[12]

"The sage whom we remember, R. Samson Hirsch, more than any other man, exemplified in his life the teachings of the Torah portion. He reached the highest level of our Jewish religion by representing God's sanctuary on earth and by bringing to all men God's spirit which dwelled in him. He was a man truly devoted to God, who committed his body, wealth, and intellect to elevate all men to the heights of Divine worship. He was the 'fighter of God's War' against the sinful ones of his generation. He struggled to plant the seeds of orthodoxy in his corrupt city of Frankfurt. He brought God's spirit to all through his relentless commitment to educate our people, whether young or old. He erected institutions filled with the unchangeable truths of Judaism. Like King Solomon, Hirsch 'made ears for the Torah' by increasing the number of Jews who hearken to the teachings of Torah.[13] This he did by presenting his teachings in a language easily understood to all; he took ancient words robed in profundity and dressed them in contemporary garments familiar to the modern Jew.[14] Anyone who has read Hirsch's great work, The Nineteen Letters, will certainly realize that before reading it he did not understand the Jewish

religion as he does now. He will literally become a new person. Hirsch's second publication, Horev, wonderfully describes the 'fence around the commandments' and will surely fill the world with the glory of God. But now, at his death, we must shed tears and remember 'Thus passes the Glory of the World (Av. Zar. 20a).' We have lost, because of our sins, the shepherd of Israel; 'The elders of Zion sit upon the ground and keep silent (Lam. 2:10).' "[15]

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The third major theme which Spitzer addressed in his eulogies was the crisis in leadership which resulted when the righteous died. The men Spitzer eulogized were truly "fighters of God's War" in the battle to preserve Orthodox Judaism. They were praised as exemplary figures and dedicated leaders. Their death posed a serious threat to the continuation of the battle against the reformers. Spitzer undoubtedly felt alone and deserted in his role as a surviving leader of orthodoxy. Every eulogy he delivered for a fellow "comrade in battle" must have heightened his sense of despondency.

The eulogies, however, do not reflect a total despair for the future. Spitzer was challenged to renew the courage of his congregation to stand firmly in their struggle against liberal Judaism. It was also incumbent upon Spitzer, as a surviving leader, to reconfirm in the presence of the people, his continuation of leadership. The congregation, and Spitzer, had suffered a setback, but the fight against heresy would continue. God would not abandon His people if they truly repented for their sin. Spitzer relied upon the wisdom preserved in Scripture and Midrash to indicate the manner in which leadership was carried on by disciples of the righteous.

"Until the death of the leader, the congregation stands firmly in battle to protect true religion and Torah from all enemies. We rely upon the leader's support to counter evil ordinances issued, on account of our sins, by the foreign country in which we live. We securely battle heretics within our own camp as it is said, 'Your destroyers and they that lay you waste shall go forth from you (Is. 49:17).[16] Upon the death of the leader, 'all knees shall be weak as water,' for we have no support for our feet in battle. There is no one to advise us in religious matters, no one to answer questions in Torah. 'And with whom have You left these few sheep (Sam. 117:28).'"[17]

Interestingly, within the same eulogy Spitzer advised his congregation that leadership will continue. He also suggested that the congregation had a significant role to play in order to guarantee their own future security.

"Before Elijah was to be summoned to life everlasting he was asked by his disciple Elisha: 'I pray thee, let a double portion of your spirit be upon me (K. II 2:9).' Elijah responded: 'You have asked me a difficult question; if you see me when I am taken from you (Lukah Me-Itcha) it shall be so for you, but if not, it shall not be so (K. II 2:10).' Elisha's question was prompted by his desire to continue the skilled leadership of his teacher. Elisha had always wondered how Elijah could both teach the young and the old, the beginner and the scholar. How could Elijah lower himself to explain the way of pilpul and to extract the law from Torah on a level necessary for a beginner to understand. Elisha thus asked for a 'double portion' of spirit, because Elijah's spirit was as a two-sided sword. One side was sharp for his own needs and the other was dull for the needs of his students. When Elijah therefore said, 'if you see me,' he means, 'if you see that my great knowledge is taken from you (Lukah Me-Itcha),'

that is, taken from my students, then 'it shall be so for you,' that is, it will be easy for you to continue after I am gone. Elisha will then know that, in truth, a teacher does not lower himself to teach the student, but is raised by his student. Our sages taught us this lesson when they said, 'More than from anyone I have learned from my students.'[18] This is the beauty and wisdom of Torah. One learns Torah to teach it to others, not like other knowledge which a man studies only for himself."[19]

"I once heard my teacher, R. Abraham Sofer, speak the following words and I will try to repeat them to you exactly as I heard them. My teacher quoted R. Yochanon b. Zackai who said: 'Two roads are before me, one leading to the Garden of Eden and one leading to Gehenom (Hell), and I do not know by which I shall be taken, thus how can I not cry (Ber. 28b).' Sofer explained that, even though a man may serve God and study Torah all his life, and rightfully expect to enter Gan Eden, he can never be sure that this will happen. When he dies his students will decide for him. This is because his students may break the yoke of God's commandments and corrupt God's teachings. If they do so, their teacher is equally held accountable for their sins and will enter Gehenom. On the other hand, if the students remain faithful to God and to Torah, then their teacher shares in their merit and he will enter Gan Eden.

"We must take this teaching of R. Sofer to heart. It is upon all of us now to examine our deeds and accept repentance in our hearts if we wish to ensure our teacher's blessing in the world to come. We are instructed: 'When a righteous man dies, all approach him, all mourn for him, all sit upon the ground (Tos. M.K. Ch. II).' 'And the elders of the daughters of Zion sat upon the ground and kept silent (Lam. 2:10).' They sat upon the ground to examine carefully their deeds and to stir repentance.

"It is instructive for us to examine how the prophet Jeremiah ended his Book of Lamentations. We read in the last two verses of the book: 'Return us to You and we will return, renew our days as of old. But You have utterly rejected us. You are very angry with us (Lam. 5:21, 22).' Because Jeremiah ended the book on a tragic note (vs. 22), he returned and repeated the next to last verse (vs. 21) in the postscript in order to ultimately conclude on a note of optimism and hope. We must learn from this that God's mercy is boundless and so He prepared our salvation prior to striking us with evil blows. Before rejecting Israel, God first displays his willingness to receive her in repentance. We today are equally blessed with God's mercy. Before God struck down our beloved sage, R. Abraham Sofer, he created our salvation in the presence of his son' ...'Unto us a son is given, and the rule shall be upon his shoulder (Is. 9:5).'[20] 'And the sun rises and the sun goes down (Eccl. 1:15).' 'In place of your fathers shall be your sons (Ps. 45:17).' May God bless R. Sofer's son and his seed and permit him to carry on in the noble tradition of his father and grandfather (Hatam Sofer). May God be so blessed that 'out of Zion shall go forth the law and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem (Is. 2:3).'"[21]

A theme which has appeared throughout the previous discussion of the eulogies was Spitzer's concern for the preservation of Orthodox Judaism. Death was explained as the result of sin, which Spitzer defined as the violation of God's covenant with Israel. The mourner was instructed to repent, i.e. to return to the observance of God's commandments. The life of the deceased exemplified this faithful devotion to God and to Torah. By properly mourning the death of the leader, the mourner would both repent of his sin and reconsecrate himself to halacha. The occasion of mourning became an occasion for the Jew to reaffirm his acceptance of God's covenant.

Spitzer understood the covenant between God and Israel to be eternal and unchangeable. The reformers' attempt to modify that covenant threatened to destroy the historical continuity of the Jewish people. Spitzer thus defined Orthodox Judaism as Torah - True Judaism, because it, alone, maintained strict adherence to God's eternal law. The reformers were heretical because they did not accept God's covenant as eternally binding and immutable. They broke the continuous bond which united the present Jew with his ancient ancestor.

"We read in the weekly Torah portion (Nitzavim): 'You stand this day all of you before the Lord your God; your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, all the men of Israel. That you should enter into a covenant with the Lord your God, and into His oath which the Lord your God makes with you this day (Deut. 29:9, 11).' These were the words which Moses our Teacher read before our ancestors on Mount Horev. So do we today read these words, we who have gathered to mourn the death of our Moses, our great leader Moses Montefiore. Yet, we gather today primarily to reestablish and intensify our acceptance and trust in God's covenant. It is an eternal covenant which will never be forsaken. In this eulogy we focus upon the central moments of Montefiore's life. When we review his great deeds we understand that the nation who gave birth to such a leader is itself an eternal nation. We not only acknowledge the accomplishments of our members in the present, but we must also realize that within our very bosom we carry the spark of Divinity which guarantees our immortality. The Divine spark of immortality resides in the life of all our great children, from Moses to Moses and beyond.

'We have many enemies in the world who wish to destroy the foundation of our holy nation. Though we counter them with speeches and writings, our greatest

weapon of defense is the very example of the departed. The great deeds performed by Montefiore indicate to all, the wickedness of our enemies. His deeds silence their attack. Thus when we are commanded to 'enter into a covenant' we must remember our immortality as a people. To do so we must forever remember the great virtues of Montefiore, to keep his life constantly before us as a source of instruction. We must honor in our lives what he honored in his life. We must express our devotion to Montefiore by renewing our devotion to God and to Torah. 'For I the Lord change not, and you sons of Jacob are not consumed (Mal. 3:6).' We are an immortal people, who must continue to pass on from generation to generation our acceptance of God's covenant. 'No weapon that is formed against you shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise against you in judgment you shall condemn. This is the inheritance of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of Me, says the Lord (Is. 54:17).' Through the inspiration of Montefiore we shall carry the banner of our existence and of our immortality against every stormy wind and wave of the sea. In righteousness we say: 'You stand this day to pass on the covenant.'"[22]

The four themes previously discussed are most vividly illustrated in Spitzer's eulogy for R. Simeon Sofer. Though each theme has been separately examined for the sake of clarity, it is equally important for the reader to appreciate the manner in which the themes are related within the flow of the eulogy.

The central idea of the eulogy is expressed in its opening scriptural passage (Ps.139:5). The idea concerns the relationship between the historical past and the present. Spitzer argued that Judaism had evolved as a religious system of worship to God. The eternal nature of Judaism was rooted in this process of evolution. Though God's law was eternal and unchangeable, the law was inter-

preted differently during the development of Jewish history. The law was never rejected (the goal of the reformers), it was only differently conceived by man as he grew in wisdom and learned to better understand the will of God. This conception of "evolution" enabled Spitzer to incorporate the principle of "change" into the character of orthodox Judaism.

"We read in the Book of Psalms: 'You have hedged me in behind (Achor) and before (Kedem), You have laid Your hand upon me (Ps. 139:5).' From the Book of Genesis we learn that man was both created after all animals (Gen. 1:26) and before all animals (Gen. 1:2). Man's essential nature was his spirit (Ruah) which exists before his bodily creation. We further learn from the words of R. Simlai in the Midrash that the law of man (Lev. 12:2) was recorded in Scripture after the law of animals (Lev. 11:46). Rashi offers important insight into the matter when he discusses the ordering of the Books in Scripture. 'There is a development, from Genesis to Leviticus leading to the ultimate completion and perfection of man. In Leviticus (Lev. 1:1,2) man learns to offer sacrifices to the will of God.' Before man learned that true sacrifice was worship (Avodah) he sacrificed animals: 'This is the law of the sacrifice (Lev. 6:2).' The early laws of Leviticus also instructed man to be disciplined in his drink (Lev. 10:8) and in his food (Lev. 11:1). Only after such laws were presented does Scripture record the law of man in the portion Kedoshim (Lev. 19:18): 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' The essence of the law of man is that one must not commit a sin against his neighbor. God demands righteous actions. He who sins will surely be punished. We may ask, if this law of man is so important, why was it recorded after the law of animals? What did R. Simlai intend to teach us? The answer is, that man's law was

recorded last to teach us that it is the climax to all other laws. Man comes to resemble his creator by virtue of his elevated status in the creation process. 'Just as God is merciful, so shall you be merciful (Sifre Akev 49).' 'You shall walk after the Lord your God ... and cling unto Him (Deut. 13:5).'

"The life of our teacher, R. Simeon Sofer, is an example of how man ascends the ladder of true devotion to God. In his youth, R. Sofer dedicated himself to fulfilling the law of Lev. 1:2; all his time and energy was devoted to God in study, prayer, and fasting. Through his utmost concern for ritual purity, R. Sofer fulfilled the laws of sacrifice. R. Sofer grew into manhood prepared, by the discipline of his youth, to fulfill the law of man. His love and patience for all men was excessive. He would overcome his need for sleep in order to help those coming to him with requests. His love for man equalled his passionate devotion to God. Why then did so many slanderous enemies of Israel accuse R. Sofer so unjustly. They charged that he was opposed to the freedom of his people and that he advocated their continued existence in the diaspora.[23] This is a lie. Many times I saw him crying over the distress of his people throughout the world. He would say: 'I am distressed when I think that my people remained unchanged after continued persecution and hostility, yet now, with abundance and freedom they go astray from God's law.' R. Sofer would prey to God to purify his peoples' hearts to endure their experiment in wealth and freedom. Does this not demonstrate his great love for his people?

"We are, therefore, obligated today to shed tears over Simeon the Righteous, whom we have offered as a holy sacrifice ten days ago. It is written in Menuchot 15b: 'And a man may offer a sacrifice and libation until the tenth day.' So today, the tenth day, let us go and repent through tears.

"It is recorded: 'Simeon the Righteous was of the remnants of the Great Assembly, he used to say: Upon three things does the world stand; upon Torah, upon Worship (Avodah), and upon acts of loving kindness (Avot. 1:2).' Who was this Simeon the Righteous, and who were the men of the Great Assembly? We learn from the sages (Ned. 9b) that Simeon only once ate from a trespass offering brought by a defiled Nazir. He did so because that Nazir impressed Simeon by his willingness to devote his whole being to serve God. It was Simeon's wish to reward this Nazir and to indicate to all Nazarites that the true expression of abstinence and sacrifice was man's inner purity and devotion to God.[24]

"We can better understand the correct meaning of sacrifice by answering the question, who were the men of the Great Assembly? We read in Yoma 69b, 'R. Joshua b. Levi asks: Why were their names called 'Men of the Great Assembly (Anshai Knesset ha-Gadol)?' Because they returned Judaism (the crown of the Divine attributes) to its former glory (Hechziru Atarah L-Yoshnah). Moses originally called God: 'The Great, the Mighty, the Awesome (ha-Gadol, ha-Gibor, V'ha-Nora, Deut. 10:17). Jeremiah came and omitted 'The Awesome' from God's name (Jer. 32:18). Daniel came and omitted 'the Mighty' from God's name (Dan. 9:4). Then came the men of the Great Assembly and returned God's name to its former glory by again accepting the appellation uttered by Moses."

(Spitzer continues his explanation of the behavior of the Jewish people before (Kedem) and after (Achor) the destruction of the Temple and the rise of the Great Assembly.)

"During the existence of the first Temple the Israelites were idol worshippers. At that time, before the existence of the Great Assembly and before the rabbis

fixed prayers and blessings, man was forced to show devotion to God and repent wrongdoing by bringing sacrifices to the Temple. It was only in the Temple that the Shechinah was thought to reside and where man could communicate, through the priesthood, with God. This was all changed, however, from the rise of the Great Assembly. These sages eliminated the inclination for idol-worship by instituting fixed prayers and ritual. With prayer, man was able to control his evil inclination through his own discipline. He no longer required a priestly intermediary and sacrifices. [Note the similarity between this and the opening discussion of Achor and Kedem.]

"The wisdom of the men of the Great Assembly was that they realized the people did not understand the essence of sacrifice. (Similar to the Nazarites who did not understand the meaning of abstinence and sacrifice.) The people did not comprehend that sacrifices were only the first step towards devotion and worship of God. Even the prophet Jeremiah, admonished his people for devoting too much emphasis on sacrifice (law of sacrifice) and not sufficient concern for righteous action (law of man). We read in the weekly Haftorah portion: 'Thus says the Lord of Hosts ... put your burnt offerings into your sacrifices, and eat flesh. For I spoke not to your fathers ... concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices. But I commanded them to obey my voice ... and walk in all the ways that I have commanded you ... (Jer. 7:21-23).' Therefore, the men of the Great Assembly instructed Israel that not in one Holy Place, and not by sacrifice alone would the Shechinah appear in Israel. It would appear wherever God's 'Might' and 'Awesomeness' is glorified, whether in exile or in Israel. Through fixed prayer Israel could call upon their God without a central Holy Place, and the Israelites remained one people throughout the world. This is the reason why we call their name, 'Men of the Great Assembly (Knesset ha-Gadol),

for they literally gathered together the great body of Jews through prayer and instruction.

"Now we see that Simeon the Righteous was of the remnants of the Great Assembly (Avot 1:2). Simeon counselled us that sacrifice alone was not sufficient, that the world rested upon three things: 'Upon Torah,' that is, the law of sacrifice; 'upon Worship' (Avodah), that is, true devotion to God through fixed prayer; and upon 'Acts of Loving Kindness,' that is, acts which can be performed in all places where Jews unite. Simeon taught that the essence of being a Nazirite was the directioning of one's heart to God (Kavanah)."

The above discussion illustrates Spitzer's understanding of the historical development of Jewish ritual observance. The manner in which the Jew expressed devotion to God evolved through the course of Jewish history. Man began at the lowest level of devotion when he sacrificed animals to repent sin. He mistakenly believed that God desired the sacrifice of the animal. With proper discipline in Torah, prayer, and righteous acts, man learned that true devotion and repentance was the ultimate sacrifice of his will to the will of God.

This concept of sacrifice can also be related to the funeral service. The ancient Israelite understood that death was the result of sin. In order to repent he offered sacrifices to God. He failed to understand, however, that God was not desirous of animal sacrifice, but rather He was desirous of the sacrifice of man's heart to do the will of God. Spitzer instructed his congregation that true repentance required their total acceptance of God's covenant. The "sacrifice" of the righteous would not alone expiate the sins of the people. To Spitzer, the function of HeSPeD was to secure the congregation's devotion to God. The

sacrifice demanded of the people was their complete dedication to God and to Torah.

'We have learned from our sages that as long as a man's son lives, the man is not called dead, for his strength and honor lives on through his son. Eleven years ago I eulogized R. Abraham Sofer, Hatam Sofer's oldest son. Today I eulogize R. Simeon Sofer, Hatam Sofer's last son and the last remnant of the Great Assembly. We must, therefore, also mourn today the death of our great sage of the Torah, Hatam Sofer. It was over hundred years ago that Hatam Sofer first began to teach Torah in Israel (Kedem). One hundred years ago also the Apikorsim (enlighteners) appeared, and from that moment on minut (sectarianism) began to spread and occupy the world. To combat this danger, God sent his Holy Angel, Hatam Sofer, to spread Torah and raise disciples, who today fill Europe. Like Moses our Teacher, Hatam Sofer formed a great assembly in Torah and assembled one people before God.

'My friends, I now repeat the opening passage of this eulogy: 'You have helped me in behind (Achor) and before (Kedem). You have laid Your hand upon me (Ps. 139:5).' Because God has taken the righteous from us, it is our obligation to now consider what came before (Achor) and what will come in the future (Kedem) in order to understand the magnitude of our punishment. [Spitzer clearly reverses the prior meaning for Achor and Kedem. The terms now must mean: 'from behind' and 'in front of' respectively.] We have seen many changes in the world during the past one hundred years. Then the world was full of Torah and love for God. There were only the beginnings of interest in secular knowledge and universal liberty. These forces did not pose a real danger to Torah-True Judaism, because men like Hatam Sofer continued to inspire the people with reverence for God and for study of Torah.

"Today, the world has radically changed. It is full of sectarianism and experimentation in Judaism. Jews in increasing numbers have begun to desecrate the Sabbath and transgress commandments. The Torah is placed in a 'dark corner' where no one expounds it and no one trusts in it. We have lost our great light in Torah, Ḥatam Sofer. We are as a flock without a shepherd. Disunity and scandalous behavior invades the house of Israel.

"Our righteous teacher Ḥatam Sofer once said: 'Also before there were Sadducees and Boethusians but against them were great ones of Israel. Now, 'little foxes spoil the vines, for our vines (because of our sins - Sofer's words) are without grapes (Cant. 2:15).' Due to our great sins, we must now repent and shed tears.

"Our sages have taught: 'Be fervent in my eulogy for I will be standing there (Shab. 153a).' We learn from this that the soul of the deceased is here with us now. Our sages further taught: 'They speak before the dead only the words of the dead (Sh. Ar. Y. D. 344:16).' We therefore must speak the words which Simeon the Righteous would have spoken. 'Open thy mouth for the mute (B. B. 41a).'"

The remaining section of the eulogy is the text of a discourse R. Sofer would have delivered had he been able. The discourse serves as a recapitulation of the central points expressed in the eulogy.

"My friends, I am not able to escape from the responsibility of addressing you. I do so, not because I am commanded, but because I am a lover of Israel and it pains me to see you sin. My beloved friends, why do you spread false and slanderous rumors about me. Do you not know that anyone who rises up against his teacher is likened unto one who rises up against the Shechinah.

'You shall not utter a false report (Ex. 23:1).' Insults and abuses from the mouths of idlers here are accepted by you and even spread by you.

"Now, if I thought that you were enemies of Israel who rejoice in breaking God's law then I would be silent. But I know you are Jews who love the righteous. You must not allow one evil person who wrote this slanderous pamphlet to deceive all of you.[25] It is a lie.

'Though you may not be worthy I will forgive you with a complete heart. I ask of you, however, one thing. Let this be a lesson to you for the future. Do not believe lies about the righteous. Investigate your information carefully. Even our teacher Abraham waited to break the tablets until he saw the Golden Calf, even though God previously told him his people had sinned (Ex. 32:7).

"I have one further request to make. As one of the remnants of the Great Assembly, I ask you to unite and not be divided. As Jews in the past were one people fighting for the sake of their faith, so we must be one in the present (Achor and Kedem). I ask you to do this for the sake of my father, Ḥatam Sofer. Respect your sages, respect your Torah, and love your God. May your tears and repentance be acceptable before God. 'From out of Zion shall go forth the Law and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem (Is. 2:3).' May the redeemer come to Jerusalem speedily in our day. Amen."

NOTES

CHAPTER V

[1] HeSPeD Two, p. 96.

[2] Moed Katan, 28a.

[3] Support for this procedure of mourning to ensure individual atonement is the example of the Israelites who wailed and shed tears over the death of Nadav and Avihu (Lev. 10:4-6).

[4] Support for the failure of the Israelites to properly mourn Miriam's death is Nu. 20:1-13. Immediately after Miriam is buried the congregation rebels against Moses and Aaron. They complain that there is no water and that they will surely die. Not only have they failed to properly mourn, but they have also forsaken their trust and devotion in God.

[5] HeSPeD Eight, p. 111.

[6] In HeSPeD Two, Spitzer quotes Jer. 22:10, "Weep ye not for the dead, neither bemoan him, weep greatly for him that goes away for he shall never return again." It is of interest to note that Spitzer quotes only the second part of the verse, beginning with, "Weep greatly ..." Clearly the first part of the verse contradicted Spitzer's message and was thus left out.

[7] HeSPeD Six, p. 108.

[8] HeSPeD Eight, p. 111.

[9] HeSPeD Two, p. 97.

[10] HeSPeD Seven, p. 109.

[11] J. D. Eisenstein, Otzar Dinim Uminhagim - A Digest of Jewish Laws and Customs, (New York: Hebrew Publishing Co., 1938), p. 403.

[12] Note the play on the word Mishcan (sanctuary). Spitzer also explains that the term, Mishcan, is used in Ex. 25:9 in place of the term, Mikdash, to indicate Israel's need to be faithful to God's will. If the people neglected God's commandments, then His Holy Sanctuary (Mishcan) would be degraded (M-Mash-Che-nin) and destroyed.

NOTES

CHAPTER V (continued)

[13] Yeb. 21a, "Before Solomon appeared, the Torah was like a basket without handles (oznayim). When Solomon came he affixed handles to it." Spitzer is clearly playing on the double meaning of the word, ozen, which is both "handle" and "ear."

[14] Spitzer quotes for "proof," Is. 50:4. "The Lord God has given me a language of study (L-Shon Limudim) that I should know how to speak a word at the appropriate time to him that is weary ..."

[15] HeSPeD Eight, p. 111.

[16] The reference here to "destroyers" reflects Spitzer's opinion of those reformers (called "Sons of Belial") who sought to radically change Torah-True Judaism.

[17] HeSPeD Two, p. 98.

[18] Taanit 7a.

[19] HeSPeD Two, p. 98.

[20] Spitzer selectively quotes from the Isaiah verse, omitting the problematical opening and concluding words: "For a child is born unto us ... and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."

[21] HeSPeD Two, p. 99.

[22] HeSPeD Seven, pp. 109-110.

[23] Spitzer does not specify the individuals who made this charge. A possible source could be secular Zionists who found, in the orthodox rabbinate, an obstacle to their movement.

[24] According to Ned. 9b, the Nazir accepted his station of being a Nazirite from the initial desire to curb his evil inclination. His resolution to shave his beautiful locks of hair is expressed by the words: "ha-Avodah Sh-Agalecheeha, for the purpose of service and true devotion will I shave for you." The word ha-Avodah is darkened in the printed text to highlight its significant interpretation.

NOTES

CHAPTER V (continued)

[25] Spitzer does not name the individual nor does he explain the nature of the pamphlet.

CHAPTER VI

STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE EULOGIES

The eulogies discussed in the previous chapter were clearly delivered by Spitzer in a sermonic form. Spitzer was a Darshan, who used the Derasha as a vehicle to instruct his congregation in the proper observance of death. The question must therefore be asked: To what extent was Spitzer, as a Darshan, influenced by the new style of preaching that developed in the nineteenth century? Moreover, to what extent do Spitzer's eulogies reflect characteristics of the traditional and modern Jewish sermon (see Chapter II)? The answers to these questions will enable the reader to better appreciate the eulogy as a sermonic form.

The structure of the eulogies in Tikkun Shelomo reflects Spitzer's emphasis on textual exegesis. Similar to the Derasha, the eulogy begins with either a passage from the weekly Torah reading or with a proem verse from Scripture or Midrash. This opening text expresses an idea which will be interpreted by Spitzer to relate to the occasion of death and mourning.

The eulogy can be described as containing two separate units: the "large" sermon and the "small" sermon. The "large" sermon, which is fashioned upon the introductory text, prescribes the overall structure of the eulogy. This text serves an umbrella-like function in uniting the various component parts of the eulogy. Each component part represents a "small" sermon. It is generally introduced by a scriptural or midrashic text and consists of an exegesis on that text which is thematically independent from the "large" sermon. Spitzer's skill as Darshan lay in his ability to relate the various "small" sermons to the idea expressed in the "large" sermon. In this way the eulogy becomes a structurally

and thematically unified sermon. Two examples of this method of organization will help illustrate the process.

In the eulogy for R. Simeon Sofer (See Chapter V), the introductory text (Ps. 139:5) expresses the idea of "Past" (Achor) and "Future" (Kedem). The idea is interpreted by Spitzer as it relates to Biblical law, the essence of sacrifice, the life of the departed, and the contemporary struggle within the Jewish community. The idea thus serves to connect the constituent themes of the eulogy into a unified whole.

The eulogy for R. Abraham Sofer reflects the use of the introductory text itself to organize the component parts of the discourse. The text reads: "Sigh therefore, son of man, with the breaking of thy loins and with bitterness sigh before their eyes. And it shall be when they say unto you, why do you sigh? And you shall answer, for the news, because it surely comes, and every heart shall melt, and all hands shall be feeble, and every spirit shall be faint, and all knees shall be weak as water .... (Ezek. 21: 11, 12)."

Spitzer uses this text both as a thematic interpretation of the mourning occasion and as an organizing principle for the structure of the whole sermon. Each physical reaction expressed in the Ezekiel text, i.e. melting of the heart, feebleness of the hands, faintness of the spirit and weakness of the knees, serves to introduce a section of the eulogy. Though each section comprises an independent exegesis on the "physical reaction," it is nevertheless connected to the "large" sermon.

A second similarity which Spitzer's eulogy bears to the Derasha is its use of Scripture to supply authority for various ideas expressed in the sermon. Spitzer's knowledge of Biblical, as well as midrashic sources is extensive. It is not uncommon to find twenty to thirty scriptural proof-texts within a four-page

eulogy. This repeated use of Scripture in the eulogy reflects Spitzer's acceptance of the traditional style of Jewish preaching. It will be recalled that the Bible represented for the traditional Darshan the ultimate repository of truth and knowledge. When Spitzer appealed to his congregation to shed tears in repentance, he grounded that instruction in words of Torah (cf. Lev. 10:6, Jer. 22:10, Lam. 2:10). The heretics who desire to uproot the foundation of Judaism are also described in scriptural terms (cf. Is. 49:17). Whenever possible, Spitzer spoke through the "words of Torah;" the handbook for the traditional Darshan.

To what extent was Spitzer influenced by the new style of preaching in the nineteenth century? Based on the information presented by Altmann (see Chapter II) it would appear that Spitzer was not significantly affected by changes that occurred in Jewish homiletics. His eulogies do not reflect the concern of the Protestant edificatory sermon. The emphasis on clarity of expression and simplicity of organization which is present in the modern Jewish sermon is not found in Spitzer's eulogies. His eulogies have been shown to resemble the traditional Derasha, which was intricately rooted in exegesis. Spitzer's audience was comprised of Orthodox Jews who understood, and most likely expected to hear a traditional Derasha. It is therefore difficult to imagine that Spitzer, schooled in ultra-orthodox Judaism, would adopt sermonic changes advocated by the very men against whom he fought.

There is a significant difference between the sermons of Adolf Jellinek and the eulogies of Spitzer. Jellinek did return to an increased use of Midrash and Scripture in his sermons. The result, however, was not a traditional Derasha. Jellinek's sermons were clearly organized and easily understood by a congregation unschooled in traditional sources. Jellinke spoke in the first

person, and the message he delivered was clearly his own. He used Scripture, not to validate his own words, but rather to demonstrate the richness of the Jewish heritage. Spitzer rarely used the first person pronoun, "I." The eulogies read as Midrash, not as the appeal of an individual preacher to his congregation. Spitzer's personal message was contained in the interpretation he made of the text.

Spitzer's eulogies do, however, reflect his awareness of contemporary homiletical practice. First, the eulogies were delivered in the German language. Occasionally a German word or expression will appear in the printed text. Secondly, Spitzer's concentrated effort to relate the themes of his eulogies to his larger historical environment is similar to the practice of Bernays and Rapoport. In this respect, the eulogies in Tikkun Shelomo resemble the modern Derasha.

Spitzer's orientation as an ultra-orthodox rabbinic leader determined the construction of his eulogies. His total acceptance of halacha as binding and authoratative directed him to rely upon Biblical and rabbinic sources to validate his arguments. The style of preaching in which Spitzer was schooled was based upon traditional Jewish homiletics. His teachers were skilled in pilpul and Midrash, not in nineteenth-century German Protestant rhetoric. Spitzer preached with great urgency to convince his congregation that the Jewish past was worthy of preservation. He communicated that message in the only form he knew, i.e. the traditional Derasha.

NOTES

CHAPTER VI

[1] Joseph Dan, "Homiletical Literature; Middle Ages," p. 950. Dan examines these two terms as they relate to the medieval Derasha.

CONCLUSION

The effective leader capitalizes upon every available opportunity to present his message and stimulate support among his followers. The leader appeals to a cause which the people cherish and which demands their allegiance. The leader bases his words on an authority larger than himself in order to convince his followers that truth is on their side. The leader warns his followers that the future of the cause is in danger; enemies seek to destroy it. The people must be strong and committed to its defense; if they falter the battle is lost.

R. Solomon Spitzer was such a leader of men. The cause he advocated was the preservation of Torah-True Judaism, the only legitimate heir to the ancient covenant God established with Israel. Spitzer lived in an age when men challenged the concept of the immutability of Torah, when reason became the ultimate judge of truth. The authority of Torah and God's commandments was collapsing under the pressure of enlightenment. The battle against the reformers which Spitzer waged for forty years in Vienna occupied his total energy. His followers were in need of constant instruction and support.

As an effective leader, Spitzer seized every occasion to repeat his charge to the people. The occasion of the funeral service was no exception. The question, however, must be asked: Was it not inappropriate for Spitzer to have used the occasion of mourning for polemic purposes? Was not his message out of place within the context of a eulogy?

The setting of the funeral service provides one answer to the above question. Spitzer understood that the mourner was most vulnerable to the instruction he would receive in the eulogy. The preacher's words produced a special impact

within the atmosphere of death. In addition, a large number of people undoubtedly came to the funeral service to mourn such figures as: Abraham and Simeon Sofer, Montefiore, and Hirsch. Spitzer's message would thus reach a wide audience.

Most significant of all, however, is the answer which is suggested by the findings of this study. It has been demonstrated that Spitzer perceived the HeSPeD as a means by which to stimulate the congregation to repent for their sin. This use of the HeSPeD was well-established in Scripture and Midrash. Upon the death of the righteous the ancient sages instructed the people to examine their ways and repent. The congregation was told to shed tears because those tears served as a libation offering before God. Spitzer was only fulfilling halachic instruction when he charged his people to shed tears and repent.

It has also been explained in this study that Spitzer interpreted the sin of his time to be his congregation's acceptance of the teachings of the secular world. Death resulted when the people spurned the eternal truth of Torah, and in its stead, glorified the false promises of rationalism and science.

Spitzer instructed his congregation to emulate the noble virtues of the departed. By examining the life of the departed, the people would learn how to devote their total will to the will of God. They would understand that true sacrifice was the devotion of one's will to the service of God.

Furthermore, the people would realize that the leader they mourned embodied the faith and wisdom of ancient Jewish leaders, and that they, as a congregation, embodied the eternal soul of the Jewish people. It was therefore incumbent upon them to preserve the sanctity of that soul and to champion God's war against all enemies.

It is most understandable that Spitzer chose to incorporate this polemic message into the formulation of his eulogies. It was a message implied in the very meaning of the HeSPeD. Spitzer is only one example of a rabbi who utilized the eulogy as an instrument through which to convey a religious message to his congregation. This message, however, can be understood only when the eulogy is studied as a sermonic form.

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