

### Summary

In contemporary Jewish life voices are heard loudly proclaiming the philosophy of humanism or the tenets of naturalism. Others are attempting to lead gain followers for the crisis theology of existentialism. Despite the earnestness and the vigour of the adherents to these various interpretations of Judaism, it must be recognized that they preach only their personal religion. The recognized and generally accepted doctrines of our religion for the most part have not felt the influence of these schools of thought. This is particularly true of the idea of the real God, which remains as an unchanging principle of Judaism.

It is the purpose of the present paper to show that in American Reform Judaism, the God concept has constantly remained a basic tenet of the theology from the beginnings of the movement to the present time. This has been attempted through studying the God concepts of the outstanding leaders and thinkers of American Reform Judaism. The relation of the God idea to their interpretations of Reform, to their systems of ethics, and to their conceptions of Jewish living has been examined. The men whose writing and thinking have been studied include the organizer of the movement, Isaac Mayer Wise; the theologian of Reform, David Einhorn; along with Kaufmann Kohler, Samuel Hirsch, Emil G. Hirsch, and Hyman G. Enelow. The mode of thinking of these men varies considerably. This is in part a result of the differences in the times in which they lived. The hundred years covered were ones of great change, development, and progress. An attempt has been made to relate each man to his times and to show the influence of science and philosophy upon his thinking. Despite the many differences which became apparent, one basic similarity stands out. Each of these men

considered Judaism to be a religion centered on the living God.  
Each found his own interpretation of Judaism through his own  
faith in God.

THE GOD IDEA IN AMERICAN REFORM JUDAISM

by

Michael A. <sup>AYOM</sup> Robinson

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Referee:  
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to  
my parents  
for their example and faith  
and to Dr. Cohon  
for his guidance and his patience



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## The God Idea in American Reform Judaism

### Introduction

The concept of God has always occupied the central place in Jewish theology. In the historical development of Judaism, many of the fundamental principles of one age were modified and even abandoned by newer generations. It is true that until recent times Judaism never recognized this process of historical development. But the scientific theologian of the present day will admit that the Judaism of the Mishnah is by no means the Judaism of the Bible, and that in post-Mishnaic times also far-reaching fundamental changes of interpretation and ideology manifested themselves.

Yet amidst all of these changes certain unchanging principles remained. The idea of the real God, the Creator of the universe and the source of the moral has been a basic tenet of the faith of the successive generations of the interpreters of Judaism. Occasionally a voice is heard which attempts to reconcile the Jewish tradition with a non-theistic form of humanism. But in its finest tradition Reform Judaism also has deemed it impossible to construct a system of religious belief without a firm faith in the existence and meaningfulness of God. Although the Reformers differed frequently in their approach to Judaism and in their interpretation of it, they were in accord with the God concept. Of Albo's three basic roots (Ikkarim), God's existence, revelation, and retribution, the root of God was not touched.

The present study is an examination of the God concepts of outstanding leaders of American Reform Judaism starting with the great

organizer of the movement, Isaac Mayer Wise. As we should expect, in an analysis of any liberal movement, these men did not think alike nor fit into a single pattern. But for all of these men Judaism was the religious centered on the living God. These men gave the direction to our movement. Upon their work and through the help of their insights it can continue true to its traditional sources, but with respect to the finest insights of the present day.

### Isaac Mayer Wise

Not unlike most of the early Reform leaders in the United States, Isaac Mayer Wise was born in Germany and received his rabbinical training there. But it was in this country that his career as a reformer began. Here he served as a rabbi, campaigner, innovator, organizer, college president, journalist, editor, and publisher. Although his writings cover the entire range of Jewish thinking, Wise was above all an organizer. He sought to unify the Jewish congregations in this country under the banner of American Judaism -- to form a union of congregations and a conference of rabbis. Through union he hoped to prevent the religious anarchy which was already beginning to spread among the independent congregations, led by inadequately trained men, each with its own "minhag," each with its own way of trying to adjust the old religion to the new environment. To weld these scattered congregations together required not only the skill of a great organizer, but a unifying philosophy of Judaism. Isaac Mayer Wise was not only that skillfull organizer, but also an active thinker and a prolific writer. He plunged into the theological problems of Judaism and wrote numerous essays and articles expressing his views as well as his congregational sermons, his catechism for use in religious schools, and his systematic development of a God concept which is found in the book, Cosmic God, which took into account the findings of the then "modern" science and thinking. While Isaac Mayer Wise is not remembered as a great theologian, he did yield a great deal of influences and has left behind a tremendous legacy of theological writings.

In an essay written in 1887, "The Sources of the Theology of Judaism," Wise limits the field of Theology to "conceptions of Deity in the human mind."<sup>1</sup> According to Wise man's happiness "every fear of misery in this or another world, as well as every conception of duty and every dictum of conscience" is directly dependent on his conceptions of deity.<sup>2</sup> How does man find <sup>his</sup> conception of deity? It is not from philosophy because it is not creative and is not capable of producing facts. Its purpose is to recognize the truth as distinguished from falsehood, and to organize the truth into a systematic system of man's knowledge of the world about him and his comprehension of possible truths which are not yet factually known. Philosophy is thus limited to the field of facts which are arrived at by experience or which "reason presupposes." Wise makes a deduction from this <sup>premise</sup> which is dependent upon the acceptance of his limitations of his philosophy that, because philosophy is not creative, the "conceptions of deity must be present in the mind before reason can work upon them <sup>and</sup> analytically or synthetically; hence they are revelations, or in other words, intuitive knowledge."<sup>3</sup> Thus all our knowledge of God comes from two sources, direct revelation by God through man, and the a priori or intuitive knowledge of the mind. "as man discovers them in himself."<sup>4</sup> Scriptural revelations seem to be for Wise that which raises intuitive knowledge from the unconscious to the conscious level.<sup>5</sup> Judaism accepts the material scriptures, -- the ideas and facts about God contained therein, after subjecting it to the test of reason. "The theology of Judaism is the science of the conceptions of Deity in the human mind and their logical sequences, in conformity with the postulate of reason, as laid down in the

Torah of Moses, expounded and reduced to practice in different forms, at different times, by Moses, the prophets, the hagiographers, the sages and the lawful bodies in the congregation of Israel."<sup>6</sup> Tradition then, examined by the test of reason, is essentially the source of the Jewish conception of God, as well as the source of Judaism itself. In discussing the significance of this traditional material, Wise seems to deny the idea of progressive revelation, that as the years unfold our knowledge of God increases. "It is one of the self-delusions of this and every previous period of History, that man, owing to his progress and achievements in the phenomenal and speculative sciences, knows more about the one, only and sole God, than what is laid down in the Torah of Moses, ... sages and reasoners in Israel, and among other peoples, only expound and expand what is said concerning God by Moses, more or less correctly. The genius at once conceives and produces in its totality the grand picture, which thousands of lesser ability can imitate in part or wholly, but upon which they can never improve. Moses was the inspired genius, his mind was the focus in which all conceptions of Deity, as revealed in the human mind, converged; ... beyond this human reason cannot proceed ... he gave a full and exhaustive statement of what we can know of and about God ... These are the limits of human reason, beyond which no mortal ever penetrated. What any or all men ever said of and about God is either false or else it merely expounds and expands the indestructible words of Moses."<sup>7</sup> This limitation of our knowledge about God to the teachings of Moses leaves the theologian or the philosopher of Judaism with only the task of

giving these reservations the final check of reason to test their verity and organizing them into a systematic Jewish theology.

In his catechism, Wise constantly repeats that what we know of God is revealed to us directly by God,<sup>8</sup> and we find this idea reiterated in his sermons.<sup>9</sup> As stated above, this in no way implies that religion and science or philosophy would conflict in their conceptions of deity. Wise saw Judaism as being in "perfect harmony with modern science, criticism, and philosophy."<sup>10</sup> It is only that none of these can serve as a source for the knowledge of God. Knowledge of God comes through the individual and from God. This is what Wise calls religion: "the inborn desire of man to know God and His will, in order to worship Him."<sup>11</sup> Our knowledge of God, however, is quite limited. We cannot know Himself, but know God by His manifestations in His works and His words. "No human being can comprehend the great I am; no mortal tongue can utter His praise. God has revealed as much of His nature to man as is necessary for his perfection and happiness. We know of His grace, justice, and righteousness on earth, and also that He delights therein."<sup>12</sup> Actually then, we know God as he is manifest to us in creation. "... His power, wisdom and goodness are omnipresent in all nature. He is the universal spirit in universal matter, the intellectual and moral aspect of this indifferent physical existence. The dogma of creation contains logically the dogma of revelation."<sup>13</sup> This is all summed up in what Wise called the "three fundamental principles of Jewish theology."<sup>14</sup> These are the basic principles which are manifest in creation and in revelation; that God is, God manifests himself, God is the ideal of perfection.<sup>14</sup> These fundamental principles are the recurring theme that one finds throughout Wise's writings. They are



in his catechisms, his sermons <sup>and</sup> ~~and~~ in his essays. They certainly are not new, neither is Wise's formulation of them. Their importance is that they clearly show us Wise's use of tradition as being one of the principle sources of our knowledge about God.

In his catechisms, and in the articles quoted above, Wise stresses the importance of tradition and lays heavy emphasis on scriptural sources for his development of a concept of deity. His end result fits into the traditional pattern — he has added nothing new, gone to no new sources. He does stress the fact that our concept of deity is not and cannot be in conflict with modern science and philosophy. In his book, "The Cosmic God," Wise uses an entirely different approach.

For two years Wise gave a series of Friday evening lectures from the pulpit of his congregation on the history of philosophy. At the same time he was reading voraciously the "modern" books on philosophy and science, especially German works. This reading was the basis for a series of lectures which he delivered before his congregation in the fall and winter of 1874-75. They were then revised and published as a book in 1876 under the title, "The Cosmic God, A Fundamental Philosophy in Popular Lectures." In his Preface he criticises the "sweet tempered and self-complacent pastor" who avoids metaphysics, transcendent and transcendental philosophy, <sup>or</sup> ~~and~~ formal speculations. The spirit of the age, the progress of science, and the rise of the free-thinkers has put an end to "the days of touching simplicity." "This is an age of sober reflection ... Either you are able to defend your dogmas before the judgment seat of reason, or you must see them antiquated and impotent. The conflict of science



and religion is before your doors ... You must defend<sup>d</sup> yourselves or surrender. What are your arms of defense if you philosophize not?"<sup>15</sup> Wise's purpose therefore was to answer the same problem that science and philosophy were studying, what is the universe? At one time using the findings of philosophy and science, at another refuting them, Wise developed his philosophical system of the universe. Because the universe "with the exception of matter" was considered by Wise to be synonymous with deity, "so that the present volume is in the main a new evidence of the existence of Deity," he named his book as well as his conception of deity, "The Cosmic God," "in whom and by whom there is the one grand harmonious system of things, in whom and by whom nature is a cosmos and no chaos."<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, Wise maintains that this Cosmic God is not the God of "vulgar theology" nor, as the title might suggest, the God of Spinoza or Locke which "is submerged in nature," so that nature is God, and God is nature, beyond which there is nothing," a God concept which further on, Wise refers to as pantheistic, and which he maintains led others directly into fatalism and materialism.<sup>17</sup> Evidently Wise did not read the philosophers carefully as his observations are incorrect. He does not distinguish between Locke and Spinoza properly. The God of Locke is not submerged in nature, and is not identical with nature as is the God of Spinoza. Quite to the contrary Locke conceived of matter and spirit as being separate. This dualism of Locke did not lead to materialism, as Wise claims, but rather historically, carrying Locke's philosophy to its logical extreme led to the idealism of Berkley. These observations along with other misinterpretations and misunderstandings in the preface such as his confusion when dealing with the

philosophical terms "casually" and "necessity," and his lack of clarity in his use of the word "freedom," make one wonder whether two years of reading were sufficient to prepare Wise for the task which he set for himself, to answer the question, "what is the universe?" This is a rather pretentious problem. While most scientists proceed from the small and progress to the large, he starts with the biggest possible problem. Wise <sup>had</sup> no scientific background other than what he gleaned from his readings. Surely a knowledge of physics as well as a sound scientific foundation would be required to grapple with the problem which Wise chose for himself.

However Wise approached his problem systematically. In a logical manner he begins by first attempting to establish what truth is and how it can be recognized or tested. After establishing what truth is, he would then proceed to find it by inductive philosophy. According to his definition, truth is "the accurate, complete, and harmonious knowledge of all facts and objects."<sup>18</sup> Only God in his omniscience can know absolute truth. Because man's knowledge is by necessity limited, truth is relative to his knowledge. The sole criterion of truth is harmony "in the elements of our knowledge." Harmonizing facts and theories results in the attainment of truth. This proves that man possesses knowledge which has not reached him through the avenues of his senses ... We call this other source mind, spirit or soul, with the feelings, volitions, and intelligence."<sup>19</sup> The mental element of our knowledge dominates over the sensual. It is not through the senses, but through reason that man knows "whatever he may know, affirms or denies whatever he may do

about God, man, world, and their relations."<sup>20</sup> Not by our senses do we know that propositions about God are true, but through the exercises of our reason.

Having established that the mind does not depend solely upon the senses as a source of knowledge, but that the senses depend on the function of mind to find truth, not only is it established that "the mind with the capacities, of receptivity and spontaneity accounts for our knowledge,"<sup>21</sup> but also the pitfall of leading into a philosophical materialism is avoided. Wise constantly fights against any and all philosophies of materialism. "The fundamental error of all materialism is in the self delusion of attaching more certainty to matter outside of man than to his intelligence within himself."<sup>22</sup> It is not a mere physical adjustment to a physical environment that explains man's progress but it is "mind-force (that) explains man's development." Wise finds support for this in Professor John Tyndall, a noted contemporary English physicist, himself a vigorous opponent of dogmatic theology. Tyndall argues that it is not the mere physical brain, the grey matter or the brain cells, that are the key to intelligence. From "dead atoms" in motion sensation, emotion, and thought do not arise. "The great problem, how do we come to know, can be solved only by the word MIND . . . you cannot satisfy the human understanding in its demand for logical continuity between molecular processes and the phenomena of consciousness. This is a rock on which materialism must inevitably split whenever it pretends to be a complete philosophy of life."<sup>23</sup> Darwinism, atomism, and philosophical materialism were anathemas to Wise. They keep recurring throughout the "Cosmic God, sort of as a negative theme, for they were

theories popular in his time which he considered dangerous threats to religion, and without sound scientific or philosophical basis. Darwin's hypothesis, called "Homo-Brutalism" by Wise "is an entire failure, although reproped by Haeckel in a voluminous attempt of logical force. Haeckel is the logician and Huxley the scientist of the school."<sup>24</sup> Wise satirically ridicules the notion that man with his high aspirations, his intellectual and aesthetic capabilities, could have possibly evolved from lower species of animal life. Darwin had a strong enough hold on the popular mind that it could not be devastated by mere satire. This was an age when evolution was one of the most controversial issues of the day. The more fundamentalist Protestants were condemning it on theological grounds. Wise utilized his readings in anatomy, psychology, and anthropology to attempt to disprove it on logical and scientific grounds.

After disproving to his satisfaction the possibility that evolution can give us a key to an understanding of the universe, Wise turns to the theory of atomism which he likewise rejects completely. Atomism, as Wise understood it, maintains that the primary element of the universe is matter. Carrying atomism to its logical conclusions, and "aesthetics and ethics, freedom and virtue, individuality and character, merits and demerits, religion and morals, justice and duty, self-government and self-improvement, in brief, all that makes man and society falls dead to the ground as an unwarranted superstition, unworthy of any enlightened naturalist, as all and every thing depends upon the casual or necessary configuration of atoms and the resultants of diagonal and inherent forces ... "The fundamental error of all materialism is in the self-delusion of attaching more certainty to matter outside of man than to his intelligence within

himself."<sup>25</sup> Wise accuses atomism of self-delusion because of the lack of ability of atomic science of his time to actually describe the atom, therefore it is a mere idea, or to quote Wise, "nothing." "You see the atom is as rude a metaphysical creature, except as a scaffolding for chemistry and physics, as the hobgoblin of the African savage."<sup>26</sup> Atomism is impossible because it asserts that we know more about matter than we do about our own thoughts, because it cannot account for life or thought or feeling, and because the "idea of the atom is an absurdity." However it must constantly kept in mind that Wise did not have the benefits of the findings of modern atomic physics. While his analysis of atomism must seem somewhat absurd to us today, it is not at all unreasonable in the light of the limited knowledge of his day. He did not really have enough scientific background to possibly have any insight into the direction that the findings of science were leading. Wise was a theologian trying to explain the universe. As he saw and understood atomic science, it could not possibly hold the key to the problem. Wise was trying to discover the life force in the universe. That force is a property of matter, Wise rejected completely. Force exists outside of and independent of matter. "We see the independence of force from matter as often as we look heavenward ... if all motion is in the atom, then each must be in a vacuum in which to move, so must be every body composed of atoms. The moving body must have vacant space"<sup>27</sup> ... there must be vacant space between those revolving atoms, or else they could not revolve; or as the sun force strikes them, they must be compressed to pass the force ... atomism, from whatever



standpoint you examine it, is impossible. But it is certain that, whatever we know or can know of this physical world, whatever science knows or can know thereof, is the manifestation of force. Force is immaterial and independent ... it is omnipresent and almighty, in this physical world. It is bound to no time, and no space where there is no material obstacle, and governs all material things. The laws of nature are the laws of force working upon matter. Let us examine ... whether this omnipresent and almighty force is intelligent ... whether it is infinite madness or infinite Deity."<sup>28</sup>

Wise then turns to biology to try to find an answer as to the nature of this force. Here again he employs his knowledge of the science of his day to argue his point and refute many of the prevalent theories of Du-Bois-Reymond, Buechner, the English scientists, and especially Spencer, who seems to have been an especial anathema to Wise. Where the mechanical atomists cannot explain life and its origin to his satisfaction, their definitions of it are "illogical." Wise defines life as the "differentiation of vital force which produces and develops individual organism and preserves its identity."<sup>29</sup> Organic life is a phenomenon entirely different from any other. It definitely had its beginning on this earth, this is proven by the crust of the earth,. In the different strata we can trace the history of organic life back to its beginning. Spencer and the evolutionists traced life back to the simple cell. "The cell either made itself, which no naturalist will admit, or there must be vital force."<sup>30</sup> That force must be one and universal because of the similarity in

structure of all life cells, and further, "all organic beings live by the same internal functions of absorption, assimilation, secretion, and excretion ... the sameness of phenomena in all cases points directly and distinctly to one and the same cause. Although the individuals in which these phenomena appear are multitudinous, still the vital force must be one and universal."<sup>31</sup> It follows also that force is both immaterial and alive. We jump from a repudiation of evolution to a positive theory of the origin of the earth and life. " ... the first act of creation of this or any other planet was the action of a central force upon inert and homogenous elements, in counter-action of their negative quality of separation, to subject them to the creative and forming principle. This central force, from which all forces in matter are materialized derivatives, is a function of the substance which is will, intellect, life, God, and partakes of the same nature precisely, i.e., it is not only psychical; it is will, intellect life. It is an effect, and must ... be like its cause. Vital force which is also will and intellect, is the central force of this and every other planet."<sup>32</sup> Organic matter was the building material, but vital force was the builder. "The efficient cause of the first organism was not in the cell; it was cosmic in the vital force, which weaves cells and destroys them to increase its material for more and higher organisms; hence the first organic types did not spring from the cell or cells by the combat for existence ..."<sup>33</sup> If you examine all of organic life, you will find that it centers in man. "Man is the complex of the entire organism that has come to our knowledge; and all

parts of all organisms are harmonized and perfected in man."<sup>34</sup>

While many of the methods that Darwin mentions might have actually been used, (i.e. survival of the fittest, natural selection, etc.), they were employed by nature with the purpose of reaching the object of the whole process, man. This implies that there is will, intellect, system, and design in the universe.

We know, a priori, states Wise, that every phenomena in nature is the effect of a cause. Wise could find substantial backing in his theory that the law of causality is a priori knowledge from Preyer, Kant, Schopenhauer, and Hemholts. This law is not only recognized by the intellect but verified by experience and observation. Wise reasons from the law of causality to a teleology, -- that there must be a final cause. There are some steps in his reasoning which are rather difficult to follow because of his introduction of, as yet unproved, theories such as order and harmony in the universe. But for Wise, this is sufficient to conclude that "Where there is end, aim, purpose, design ... there must be intellect to design and execute; this intellect in or above nature must be allmighty and allwise, and can only be called God ..."<sup>35</sup> All objects in nature exist according to their "inherent laws" and "are free, the law makes them free. Freedom is limited by outer violence only."<sup>36</sup>

This is a contradiction in terms unless Wise defines freedom as law. Otherwise it is a meaningless statement. It was noted previously that there is a lack of clarity in his use of the word freedom.<sup>37</sup> Never-the-less, this argument is the basis for the



development of his proof that there is will and intellect in nature, this from his definition of freedom "actualization of an inherent will."<sup>38</sup> His development of the idea of will is likewise confusing. Yet Wise considers "our thesis established; hence freedom, life, will and intellect outside of man and all organisms; therefore, also, end, aim, purpose and design, there is teleology in this vast domain of the universe."<sup>39</sup>

Having proven to his satisfaction will and intellect in nature, Wise proceeds to prove "superhuman will and intellect in history." The law of causality can be seen to hold true in history as in nature. Because teleology is true in nature, it must (why it must Wise does not say) also be true in history. Men are always the same, a baby born today being the same as one born in ancient Egypt. Yet while mankind is unchanging in quality, history does progress steadily and "the principle of progression must be extra human, and the first general principle of the Logos of History must be: It preserves, utilizes, and promulgates all that is good, true and useful, and neutralizes all that is wicked, false and useless or nugatory."<sup>40</sup> This is "proven" with examples taken selectively from history, although it seems as many examples could be found to show that the converse is true. His use of events from Jewish history is reminiscent of Judah ha Levi's use of Jewish history to prove the existence of God, which is, in effect, what Wise is leading up to. One is forced to suspect that the end result of all of this development was a forgone conclusion before the reasoning process

ever started. Maybe again it is necessary to remind oneself that Wise was not living in a period after two disastrous world enveloping wars. It may have been much easier for him to conceive of a "Logos of History" which "rights the wrongs, turns the course of events in favor of progression in spite of all the wickedness of rulers or nations, preserves the elements of truth, goodness, and usefulness, to be shaped in new elements, and neutralizes falsehoods, wickedness ..."<sup>41</sup> This same Logos of History <sup>meted</sup> ~~noted~~ out the "inevitable punishment" of national sins. While it may not be as clearly wrought in the life of the individual nor as rigidly enforced, it is there nevertheless. It is however, unquestionable to Wise, that nations grow and flourish on their virtues, and decline and perish because of their vices, "and all that by agencies perfectly natural though controlled by super-human causes."<sup>42</sup> This is the proof of reason for teleology in history, "to deny it is madness," proclaims Wise.<sup>43</sup> One might say that it takes considerable self-assurance (egotism?) for one to proclaim that if you don't accept his proof, you are insane. Possibly Wise is just carried away with enthusiasm at having arrived at what he considered to be proof that there is purpose independent of man, a superhuman will and intellect which he will subsequently prove to be Nature's God.

Wise maintains that there is a superior and governing force which unites and binds together the inferior forces in order that they may sustain intact any object of nature (i.e. the force of cohesion which holds particles of sand together in a solid rock). Wise argues from necessity that the natural objects them-

selves "forcibly and irresistibly" suggest the necessity of this superior and governing force which he had already shown to exist in biology and called the "vital force." Likewise he has shown before that the "Logos of History" reveals the same laws as the "Genius of Inorganic Nature;" "therefore we called history the continuation of the earth's creation. With man's appearance on earth, physical creation closed and mental creation began ... geology proves this abundantly."<sup>44</sup> Wise's science is of course, wrong again. Geology as now understood does not prove that the process was stopped at some time before the beginning of history. But these proofs for the vital force, the Logos of History, and the Genius of Inorganic Nature are satisfactory for Wise to conclude that these forces are actually all contained in them. He then proceeds to describe the actual creative process as a series of causes and effects, giving detailed descriptions of just how these forces worked to produce the end result, the steps in the cooling down of the earth, and the exact temperatures at the different stages of the process.<sup>45</sup> Much of this picture was of course taken from the popular science of his day with its theories of the cooling of the earth's crust. Wise accepts it as fact and elaborates on it. He states conclusively that there could have been but a single first cause and that the last link in the chain of causality must be "intelligible being akin to man." Wise asserts that as part of our knowledge of history and nature grow, we will one day be able to see the final cause of the universe. Almost as in response to Spenser's assertion that all we can know is finite and limited, Wise avows that "nothing is unknowable." Man has

but to push back the frontiers of his knowledge and the mystery of the final cause will be revealed. "Man is not fully self-conscious until he knows all which is knowable ... and consequently the work of this cause is not completed with the earth's ... creation ... the work of liberation from matter and the triumph over it begins in man, by him, and for him."<sup>46</sup> The creation of history is a process that must yet continue. It is the final cause in the other stages of creation. "You see ... it is all one piece, of one cast, one chain of cause and effects, one design, one object, all of which must have been present in stage number one and in each succeeding stage ... Here then is one will, intellect ... one spirit ... as soon as intelligence claims its right to look upon the cosmos through the law of causality, it is led forward and backward through the unbroken chain to the final cause and to the first cause, which reveals its nature in its own last triumphs, in the self-conscious intelligence of man."<sup>47</sup> God, "the substance" who gave the first impulse to start this chain of causality, is the architect and builder of this "cosmos," "triumphs over all matter in the self-conscious intelligence of man, remains in him and over him, preserving and governing all, shaping all destinies, guiding all ... He who is the Genius of nature and the Logos of History, fills all space and is the force of all forces; He is the Cosmic God, for He is the cause of all causes, the first principle of all things, the only substance whose attributes are life, will and intellect."<sup>48</sup> Not only is He the omnipresent

and sustaining force in the universe, all-wise and omniscient, the governing force, but also He is freedom and justice. This then is the God that Wise claims to have found by philosophical induction "and felt by spontaneity." Laws in the universe, laws of nature, are abstraction of the "perpetual continuity of cause and effect," and present in the divine mind. God is in the universe, but is not exhausted therein as is the God of the pantheists. The Cosmic God of Wise is not outside of the universe, but he is outside of material nature, as well as in nature. True enough it would be easy to identify Wise's Cosmic God <sup>with the God</sup> of cosmotheism or pantheism, but the essential thing is that He is not the same. The gods of pantheism and cosmotheism have no will or intellect. Pantheism takes for its god the summation of the forces and laws in the universe. For Wise man stands as the connecting link between God and nature, not as part of nature.<sup>49</sup> He has in him aspects of unconscious nature and of self-conscious God. Man is both governed by history and has a part in shaping history. Man continually develops his own nature, broadens his knowledge, gains in morality, and thereby participates with God in the continuation of the creative process. Thus the idea of the Cosmic God, while developed from science and metaphysics, is directly related to man and his life. It gives man both freedom and purpose. Although it is ostensibly arrived at through philosophy and science, it is in essence in accord with the Jewish concept of God.

It might be legitimate to ask whether Wise actually did what he set out to do, arrive at truth through inductive philosophy.



His knowledge of science was inadequate for his purpose, his understanding of philosophy was not always sound, and his logic was sometimes faulty. Although he was using inductive reasoning, one frequently has the feeling that he knew beforehand exactly where his reasoning would lead him. Wise himself so much as admits this. "Do I not know it a priori? I know that there is a God, a Providence, and an immortality, and I know it as sure as I know anything; yet I am not superstitious, ignorant, or credulous; I know all the methods of cognition and evidence in philosophy and science; still I may fail in convincing others of the correctness of my convictions, simply because the methods of cognition and evidence are not exhausted."<sup>50</sup> If Wise's knowledge of God comes to him with such certainty a priori, then why the long search for truth by inductive methods? There is no justification for it. At most Wise used the scientific and philosophical methods to test his a prior knowledge by the use of reason and possibly to learn more of the creative process and more of the nature of God.

The Cosmic God does not stand out as a milestone in the development of our knowledge of God and the universe. It is neither a new proof of God nor a new concept of God. It is an interesting example of the way in which one religious thinker tried to meet the pressing problem of the nineteenth century, the conflict of religion and science. Wise sought to educate himself in the science and thinking of his day in order to develop a theology for Judaism which would hold up in the light of science and reason. He attempted to show that the materialism

of the evolutionists and the philosophical materialists was neither scientifically nor philosophically sound. He also denied Spencer's agnostic insistence that although there is a reality behind phenomena in which they are grounded, we can never know what that reality is. Wise tried to show that we actually could know very much about the Cosmic God. However Wise never goes beyond the limitation which he set in his catechism, that we can only know God by his manifestations and cannot know Himself.<sup>51</sup>

Thus in the Cosmic God, Wise still holds the same view of deity which had caused such a stir in 1871. At a rabbinical conference in Cincinnati called by Wise and Lillienthal, the question of person in connection with Deity was "accidentally touched by two members of the conference." No debate took place and no resolutions were passed, "but enemies of the conference seized upon this episode."<sup>52</sup> Wise was one of two who "touched" the subject. Wise maintained that the attribute of personality in connection with God was taken over from philosophy into theology by Christianity to explain the doctrine of incarnation. Wise denied that the belief in a personal God was taught by Judaism. He cited Maimonides who, according to his interpretation, stated that we know only the existence, the unity, the providence, and the immediateness of God. We have no knowledge of his substance or nature. The attributes of God can only be stated negatively. The attribute of personal as applied to God was a product of anti-spinozistic philosophy. Some years before, Wise had written in his "Essence of Judaism" that the

"first cardinal doctrine of Judaism is, God is the first cause of all existence, the source of all intellect, the governor and preserver of the universe," and that "we know God by His works and words, but we know not His essence."<sup>55</sup> There is no idea of personality expressed in this chapter, what we know of God being limited to His works and words. Despite the tremendous controversy that the personal God denial caused in 1871, Wise later dropped the idea. As pointed out <sup>above</sup> ~~here~~, Wise was not clear and consistent in his theology. Thus this enthusiastic endorsement followed by a withdrawal. We find no traces of this idea in Wise's greatest literary contribution, the Minhag American.

The God concept developed in The Cosmic God is not reflected in the Minhag America, the prayerbook which Wise hoped to have adopted by all of the Reform congregations in the America. The Cosmic God is almost pantheistic, and an impersonal force at work in the universe. Not so the God of the Minhag America. In this prayerbook the God is the God of Jewish tradition. The Minhag America itself could be a Conservative prayerbook. It reflects Wise's own conservatism, his very strong dependence on tradition, and his non-acceptance of Biblical criticism. The services were shortened by the elimination of the piyutim. The prayers were changed to eliminate references to a personal messiah of the Davidic dynasty, the return to Palestine, and the restoration of the sacrificial cult and the priesthood. The cabalistic portions were also removed. The idea of God, however, remains very close to the traditional belief. He is the



creator, and ruler of the universe, a guardian and refuge, and a merciful judge who bestows grace upon man. God has existed eternally and will exist for all eternity. He created the universe by divine fiat, and is the Maker of all things. He is both omnipotent and omniscient. Wise's rejection of critical scholarship is evidenced in the retention of the prayers referring to the ministering angels,<sup>54</sup> the giving of the Torah to Moses,<sup>55</sup> the creation of the world in six days,<sup>56</sup> and the frequent references to the redemption from Egypt and the many miracles that accompanied it which run almost as a leit motif throughout the entire prayerbook.<sup>57</sup> The traditional prayers  $\int G$  and  $pe$  asking God to bring down the dew and rain are retained.<sup>58</sup>

Wise's reluctance to break with tradition and his retention of the traditional theology is shown most clearly in the Yigdal.<sup>59</sup> God is praised as eternal, a unity, incorporeal, the Ruler of the universe, revealing himself to man and inspiring chosen prophets. Influenced by his reading in philosophy, Wise does translate  $\int G$   $\int G$   $\int G$  as "the first cause."<sup>60</sup> More traditionally Moses is referred to as the acme of prophecy, an idea which Wise expounded much later as noted above when referring to his essay on sources of the theology of Judaism.<sup>61</sup> God's law is unalterable, He is omniscient, rewards the righteous and punished the wicked. Thus while the Cosmic God might seem remote and impersonal as well as almost pantheistic, the God of the prayerbook very clearly has an independent existence and is personal; personal enough to be a healer of the sick, a comfort and a refuge. While Wise was at one time engaged in a conflict in which he was advocating an im-

personal deity, it is the personal God of the prayerbook which he preached most consistently, and which we must accept as Wise's concept of deity.

David Einhorn  
Theologian of Reform

The conventional frame of thinking pictures a scholar as someone out of the mainstream of life. A theologian is thought of as being even more distant and remote. David Einhorn was a scholar and a theologian, but he was not isolated from life in any sense. Quite to the contrary, it is impossible to study Einhorn without also studying the activities in which he was involved. It is necessary to follow his numerous struggles for reform and particularly the various rabbinical conferences he participated in to obtain a dynamic conception of his principles of Reform. Over half of his life was spent in Germany. Therefore it becomes necessary to examine at length his work there although our chief interest in him in this paper is as a leader of American Reform Judaism. His active career in Reform, his thinking, and his principles were developed in Germany, unlike Isaac Mayer Wise who did not attain stature in the Reform movement until after coming to America. Einhorn's career in America was a continuation of his activities in Germany, and the principles which he developed there were those which guided him here.

David Einhorn stands among those who enunciated and were committed to principle. His efforts were built upon those of the Verein für Cultur und die Wissenschaft des Judenthums which first attempted the intellectualization of Reform Judaism, but his own contributions were unique and meaningful. Einhorn was born on November 10, 1809 in the little Bavarian village of Dispeck, near

Fuerth. By his tenth year the village teacher was proven inadequate to the task of keeping pace with his pupil, and Einhorn was admitted to the Yeshiva of Fuerth, which was under the direction of Rabbi Wolf Hamburger. At the age of seventeen he received his Rabbinical diploma.

At university Einhorn came under the influence of the great romantic philosopher Schelling whose work is essentially an attempt to break the limitations of human cognition, as formulated in Kant's criticism, by faith in the power of "intellectual intuition." Schelling tried to entwine philosophy and religion, and to him all heathen mythologies were but refractions of an original revelation. Like Hegel, he puts his Christian philosophy of existence at the end of a historical process by which an absolute standpoint in which the contradictions of existence have vanished, is achieved. Instead of destroying Einhorn's Judaism, this only served to reinforce it. Einhorn was able to conceive of the revelation of an original monotheism with the rites and practices being of a symbolic nature. He discarded the mystic and Christian elements of Schelling's philosophy and accentuated the intellectual and ethical superiority of "Mosaism," the term which he now applied to his interpretation of Judaism, and which he considered to be not a system of laws fixed for all times, but a system of doctrine in accord with the progress of the ages. When he returned from Munich where he had studied, Einhorn was no longer an adherent of Rabbinic orthodoxy but an ardent and intense believer in a this new concept of Judaism which he had termed Mosaism.

Despite his strong faith in Judaism, which he in no way

discarded, his ability and character were attacked and he was unable to secure employment, until finally in 1842, when he was called to Hoppstaedten as Rabbi of Birkenfeld in the Grand Duchy of Oldenburg. During this same period, three controversies arose which turned German Jewry into hostile camps. These were the Hamburg prayerbook controversy, the Geiger-Tiktin affair, and the deliberations of the Frankfurt Reform Verein. Since Einhorn was just beginning his career at the time of the Hamburg Prayerbook controversy, he was unable to participate in it, but we do find him on the scene in connection with the Geiger-Tiktin affair which is of importance here because it forced Einhorn to clearly state his attitude to the Talmud.

The controversy began with the appointment of Geiger as the rabbinical associate of S. A. Tiktin in Breslau. Tiktin was a typical representative of the traditional school of rabbis. He interpreted his duties to consist chiefly in the answering of ritual questions and presiding over the Bet Din. But the Breslau congregation felt the need for a rabbi who would be able to teach and preach in the vernacular in the spirit of the new age, and who could win back to the fold the many who had drifted away. Geiger was elected to the pulpit in the summer of 1838. The friends of Tiktin were determined that Geiger should not assume office. Attempts were made without success to persuade the government not to issue citizenship to him. After Geiger assumed the pulpit, the opposition continued. Tiktin refused to serve with Geiger. The result was that Tiktin was suspended by the congregation. In an effort to secure reappointment, he circulated a number of

rabbis as to the legality of the action and the validity of Geiger's interpretation of Judaism. Tiktin published a pamphlet in which the responding rabbis declared the divinity of the Talmud to be a dogma of Judaism.<sup>1</sup> They denied the right of freedom of thought and investigation as far as any traditional form, custom, or ceremony that was observed in Israel was concerned. According to these rabbis, Judaism was a fixed and immutable system.

To answer this Geiger circularized a number of rabbis of a viewpoint different than Tiktin's. In response to ~~this~~, Geiger, Einhorn states his view of the Talmud: "Such an infallibility, such an apotheosis (as Tiktin and his supporters claim) we cannot and we may not grant to the Talmud; however strong our belief in its veracity may be, we must refuse and reject such deification; we address the Talmud in these words, "Israel believes thee, but not in thee; thou art a medium through which the divine may be reached, but thou art not divine."<sup>2</sup> However the main issue involved was not the divinity of the Talmud, but the abolition of ceremonies. In reference to this, Einhorn wrote; "The departure from ceremonial laws, which is the result neither of caprice nor frivolity but the outcome of the honest conviction that such departure is in keeping with the spirit of Judaism and is a pressing demand of its natural development does not unfit a man for holding the rabbinical office. Naturally such departure may not be merely a matter of fashion or convenience, and may have nothing in common with the forcible introduction of un-Jewish points of view into the province of Judaism, nor with mere subjectivity, nor, in short, with a sort of antipathy to inherited

conditions; it must be, however, the product of deep, honest, unprejudiced investigation into the sacred sources, of a pious earnestness, a glowing enthusiasm, and finally of a ripe conclusion arrived at after weighing all causes and effects in company with other competent men, zealous for God and religion."<sup>3</sup>

Although Einhorn opposed the divinity of the Talmud, it was an opposition which was based firmly upon scientific, rational reasoning, and not upon mere whim or fancy. Reform, according to Einhorn, was a part of the continuous development of Judaism through the ages; it could not be the result of external circumstances but of internal development. This attitude is shown in his comments on the Frankfurt Society of the Friends of Reform. This was a lay group which had been profoundly influenced by Geiger's writings and which, in 1843, had promulgated its famous declaration recognizing the possibility of unlimited development in the Mosaic religion and declaring the Talmud to have no authority in dogma or practice.<sup>4</sup> While he agreed with the Frankfurt Society that the entire history of Judaism gives evidence of Judaism's capability for development, Einhorn insisted that such a development could and can only take place upon the "immovable foundations of Mosaism -- which are monotheism and belief in divine revelation." This development could be achieved by placing the spirit of Judaism which is behind all the laws in the foreground, and reducing the number of forms which threaten to overshadow the spirit and stifle Judaism, and which are themselves only temporary. In principle this is what was being done by the reform theologians. But Einhorn recognized that it had to be a slow process because of the many obstacles and



great deal of opposition it had to encounter. He felt that this process, "the practical regeneration of Judaism," was being interfered with by the Frankfurt Society because the society was merely creating dissention within the Jewish camp and was schismatic in nature. "It wants to put anarchy in the place of law. Instead of pointing out what is mutable and transitory and what is immutable and permanent, either in the doctrine or the law of Mosaism, it declares the same to be in a process of perpetual and unlimited motion, which is tantamount to saying that it has no divine character at all, that it is human in origin ... The apostles of a new religion built on mere negation have renounced not merely the externals, but the kernel, the doctrines of Mosaism ...<sup>5</sup> Einhorn could not tolerate this sort of negativism. In all of his reforms, in his consistent philosophy of reform, he constantly sought to be positive and constructive. The process of development was not a matter of uncontrolled casting off of old forms, but a continued growth and development on the solid foundations of Judaism. All the form could not be cast off, exclusive and national though it may be. It served a purpose: to protect Israel and provide Israel with a priestly garb among the nations. The form can be dropped only when Israel through the spirit of Mosaism will have spread its spirit among the whole human family and will have fulfilled its priestly mission <sup>at</sup> the arrival of the Messianic era. This concept of the mission of Israel, the "priest people," occupied an important place in Einhorn's theology. He comes back to it again and again, always emphasizing the divine calling of the Jewish people.



At the rabbinical conferences in Germany in the succeeding years, Einhorn played an important role. These conferences laid the groundwork for the contemporary Reform movement. Einhorn took a consistent stand for reform, always standing on principle, and always defending his position on the basis of Jewish tradition. He advocated the use of the vernacular in prayer at the Frankfort-on-the-Main conference in 1845. At the same conference Einhorn expounded his concept of Messianism, which for him was not centered around the restoration of the state, the Temple, and the sacrificial cult. Rather he stood for a universal worship of God through righteousness. The overthrowal of the Jewish state he looked upon as a move forward towards the greater destiny of the Jewish people. Israel was to carry the world of God to the entire world. For him the Messianic idea still carried a hope for both earthly <sup>and</sup> ~~an~~ heavenly salvation, and the doctrine of Israel's election "should be retained in the service as expressing the claim of an undeniable privilege."<sup>6</sup> In accordance which this philosophy, Einhorn wanted all the petitions for the restoration of sacrifices and of political independence eliminated from the liturgy, and in their stead the Messianic prayers so framed as to express the hope for a spiritual rebirth and the uniting of all men in faith and in love.

Other reforms that Einhorn advocated at the rabbinical conferences included the reading of the Haftorah lesson in the vernacular, and the abolition of the calling up of seven men to the Torah. He wanted to see women given an equal position with man,

and he opposed the dietary laws because they were the outgrowth of a cult in a theocratic state which no longer exists. It is important that he did not argue on the basis of the abolition of all law, rather he stated simply that the dietary laws were not intended for the present day. By this position, says Einhorn, "we are enabled to establish a great reform without making war against the divine will as expressed in the Law, and without undermining the authority of the Bible and the foundation of its moral essence."<sup>7</sup>

Shortly before coming to America, Einhorn published the first volume of a work which was never completed, entitled, Das Prinzip des Mosaismus und dessen Verhaeltniss zum Heidenthum and Rabbinischen Judenthum. In this volume he undertook to show that, in contrast to Rabbinism, for which the whole Law is the kernel and is of a binding character, the ceremonial laws, and particularly the sacrificial cult, is of a symbolic nature and not essential. Shortly after the publication of this work, in 1855, Einhorn received a call to Har Sinai Congregation in Baltimore, and continued his career of Reform in America.

In his inaugural sermon at Baltimore, Einhorn restated his views concerning the process of development in historical Judaism, and the symbolic nature of the ceremonies. Then he turned his attention to the primary concern of Jewish theology. The system of belief. Central among these beliefs are: "... the belief in God, the only One, who reveals himself particularly in man as the all-pervading Spirit; ours the belief in the innate goodness and purity of all things and particularly of those beings

created in the divine image whose power of self-sanctification is never interfered with by any other force and who need no other mediation for redemption than their own free will. Ours is the belief in one human family, whose members, all being made alike and endowed with the same claim and title to happiness, will all <sup>all</sup> participate in the bliss of that glorious time when the blood-stained purple of earthly kings will forever be consigned to the grave, together with all the garnished lies, selfishness, and persecution, and God alone will rule as King over all the nations who will become the one people of God. These doctrines ... are still the proud possession of Israel and its hope for the future ... our Judaism is the religion of the God whose name is Ehyeh, "I shall be," not a faith imprisoned behind Ghetto walls, not a widow mourning for Zion and Jerusalem, but a bride adorned for the wedding with humanity.<sup>8</sup>

His emphasis upon the imperishable spirit of Judaism and the belief in the One God, incorporeal, eternal, revealing himself through his works and through man, mark the cardinal points in Einhorn's theology. It is the spirit which is divine and abiding in the scriptural laws, rather than the letter of the law. In spirit, the Mosaic law is divine and progressive. Einhorn writes, "Modern Judaism ... draws a distinct and broad line of demarcation between the form and essence, the souls and body of the laws of God -- between such precepts which are actions of the human spirit, hence of 'absolute' and 'general' force, and such as must serve these self-conformed laws, whether they present themselves as "religious

truths or duties," ... as means, so that they can naturally claim but relative validity, limited to certain times, places, and persons."<sup>9</sup> Einhorn maintained that, for modern Judaism, Divine Revelation is not an external fact, completed and concluded, but a process which had gradually developed and evolved itself from the Divine spirit which is in man, "which commences with the primeval revelation made known to the first members of the human race and has so far reached its most important degree of development in the Revelation on Sinai, since the law of God then and there appears in its principles perfect, and a whole nation then and there received and accepted the mission of its dissemination."<sup>10</sup> This doctrine of revelation is also found in his Ner Tamid, the catechism which Einhorn published in 1866 for use in his religious school when he was rabbi of Keneseth Israel Congregation in Philadelphia.

In his introduction, Einhorn states that the purpose of the Ner Tamid was to convey a view of God and the concept of Jewish religion and to meet the necessity of a systematic presentation of the Jewish religious laws, retaining the elements of reason and spirit. Here Einhorn defines revelation as a human faculty, attained by visions and dreams as well as by the grasp of the intellect. Original revelation begins, as stated above, with primitive man; or as stated in the Ner Tamid, with Adam. Progressively higher revelations take place until the highest revelation comes with Moses to whom God declares that Israel is His first born son. And finally at Sinai, God reveals the Ten Commandments which com-

pose the entire moral order of the universe.<sup>11</sup> The sources of revelation according to Einhorn are Visible Nature, the Spirit of Man, and the History of Humanity. Revelation essentially teaches God's character in relation to the other phenomena which is attained through the recognition of God (the "Truths") and the duties of man towards God (the "commands"). In the same year that he published the Ner Tamid, Einhorn preached a sermon upon the completion of the laying of the Atlantic Cable in which he wrote that the cable "shatters the idea of the super-natural revelation of God ... God need not necessarily be revealed through wonders ... but through human genius."<sup>12</sup> Revelation was thus asserted to be a process, continuous and progressive. The Bible is one part of it, but by no means the whole. The Bible stories are divine truths in symbolic form. The Mosaic legislation in principle and spirit, but not in letter, was divine.

The rational view of revelation never led Einhorn to abandon his belief in the Personal God. Earlier in his book, Das Prinzip des Mosaismus (Principles of Mosaism), Einhorn had written that "the mosaic theology and cosmology represents God as the highest reality and personality, a Being ONE and eternal, who from His free resolve has created heaven and earth with all that lives and thrives in-it, and recognized it as good. Reality of Himself, that is, in full independence from creation, as personality and at the same time the aggregate of all that exists, both these attributes ... are the characteristic moments of the Mosaic God."<sup>13</sup> Thus God is not pantheistic, but exists of Himself, and is the totality

of powers "expressing the impossibility of comprehending the relation of the Divine Being to all Beings, according to which nothing can exist without or besides God, and to no other Being can be attributed reality or personality in an absolute sense."<sup>14</sup>

This problem of a Personal God came to the forefront as a result of the grave antagonism between Isaac Mayer Wise and Einhorn. Almost from the moment of Einhorn's arrival in America there had been open displays of hostility between the two of them. In November of 1855 at a rabbinical conference in Cleveland under Wise's leadership the gauntlet had been thrown at Einhorn's feet when the conference announced that all Israelites agree upon the divinity of the Bible and that the Talmud is acknowledged by all as the legal and obligatory commentary of the Bible.<sup>15</sup> Einhorn had fought against the binding character of the Talmud in Germany, and he could only regard such a view as deleterious to reform and as a weak compromise with orthodoxy. Wise could compromise in order to build an American Judaism. Einhorn could never compromise. He was not interested in the institution, but only in the clear conceptualization of reform. This division over principle between Wise and Einhorn divided the East and West into two hostile camps. The split seemed to be healed by the Philadelphia Conference of 1869, and it appeared that cooperatively the leaders of Reform Judaism in America would pave the road to progress. But the hostility broke out anew, and Wise and Einhorn continued their immoderate attacks upon one another in the "Israelite" and the "Jewish Times." Then in 1871 Wise called a Rabbinical Conference in Cincinnati which his Eastern opponents did not attend. They



claimed that Wise "had positively repudiated the personal God and emphatically denied that the belief in a personal God was taught by Biblical Judaism. Furthermore, he had designated the God of the Bible as being implacable, meeting out punishment, but showing no mercy and forgiving no sin, under the plea that the idea of a personal and pardoning God had its origin in Christianity."<sup>16</sup> It was this controversy over the personal God which was referred to in the preceding chapter which prompted Einhorn to set forth again his belief which he had earlier published in Principles of Mosaism. Einhorn together with the other members of the Eastern faction,<sup>17</sup> published the following declaration:

1. That the God of the Bible is not the substance of nature 'not identified with nature' but 'A PERSONAL GOD,' the creator and the governor of the universe, infinitely exalted above the same, 'looking down upon earth' -- and that whoever teaches the existence of an impersonal God has 'ipso facto' renounced Judaism;
2. That the interpretation of the idea of an impersonal God in the Bible is an infamous falsification of the Divine word;
3. That in its records of revelation, in its entire literature and history, Judaism teaches 'Divine Grace and Mercy' and consequently holds out pardon and forgiveness to the repentant sinner, and that a denial of this fact is a slander upon Judaism and a blasphemy ...<sup>18</sup>

This declaration adds nothing new to Einhorn's theology in Principles of Mosaism, but it does give a clear statement of his concept of God. His is not a new doctrine, but the traditional Jewish concept of God which is implicit in the Bible and in all of Jewish tradition. For him there could be no impersonal God.

The God of the Deists, cold and distant, could never hold the heart of the faithful believer. God is immanent as well as transcendent. He reveals Himself in man as the all pervading immanent spirit. Judaism is the religion of God, who is all holiness, Creator, Judge, the Omnipotent and Eternal. Einhorn believed in the holiness of God, man and nature. Man created in the image of the All-Holy, is holy. All men are the children of the Heavenly Father. Out of this belief in God and man grew his concept of the Mission of Israel. Israel is God's missionary, a "priest people" which must wear its priestly garb (those forms and ceremonials which he retained as still having meaning in his time expressing truths or protecting them), among the nations until that time when it fulfills its mission. This would take place at the arrival of the messianic age which would be marked by universal recognition of God and by universal righteousness. Israel was thus the priest-people of humanity for its world mission of "the Divine place of salvation."

One of Einhorn's outstanding contributions to the growth and development of the reform movement was his prayerbook, Olath Tamid, first published in 1856. There had been other prayerbooks issued by men of the reform movement, but they were frequently self contradictory. One reference to the personal Messiah would be expunged, but another would remain. Einhorn's prayerbook endeavors to maintain a historical continuity with the traditional ritual. Einhorn benefitted from Zunz's research on the rise and development of the Jewish liturgy. In the Olath Tamid the theological position of Reform Judaism is consistently embodied. In

place of the traditional "Yigdal," the poetic rendition of Maimonides' "thirteen principles of faith," Einhorn substituted his own five principles of Judaism:

1. God as creator.
2. Man bearing His image; original virtue, immortality.
3. Revelation through Moses, who ranks supreme as prophet.
4. God as judge.
5. Israel as His priest-people, bearing the Messianic message.

These principles are consistently followed throughout the prayerbook, which served as a basis for the Union Prayerbook. The prayers for the resoration of the sacrificial cult and the return to Palestine are omitted, and the doctrine of bodily resurrection is changed to the idea of a purely spiritual immortality. Einhorn's power as a thinker and his ability as a theologian are clearly demonstrated in his consistency in the Olath Tamid. Never is there a contradiction; never an idea which Einhorn did not accept completely. He was always conscious of principle and would not compromise because of sentimentality for a traditional form in prayer or practice. Read his prayerbook, and you have his theology. This is particularly evident in his service for the reception of proselytes. The convert is required to answer a list of questions which neatly sums up Einhorn's theology:

"Do you believe that God is an only Being, in whose glory no other shares?

"Do you believe that he the inscrutable Spirit of all spirits can never assume the form of any being that is in heaven

or on earth?

"Do you believe that he, the Father of all men, has created us in his image, has endowed our rational spirit with freedom and immortality, and has thus exalted man to be his son?

"Do you believe that man, like all other beings, has come pure and good from the hand of God, being born free from the stain of sin, and is naturally capable to conquer sin completely?

"Do you believe that the doctrine and law of such self-sanctification have been revealed by God on Mount Sinai to Moses, the greatest of all prophets ...

"Do you believe that the intimate communion between God and man is brought about by no other mediation than that of the imperishable spirit dwelling within us ...

"Do you believe that God has chosen Israel to be his priest-people and ordained him to propagate the doctrine of the Only-One and of his holy will among all the inhabitants of the earth; that, through the mediation of Israel, the true knowledge and worship of God will one day become the common good of mankind; and that the time of such brotherly union of all nations in God will be the true kingdom of the Messiah?"<sup>20</sup>

These questions not only succeed in clearly defining the difference between Judaism and Christianity, but also succinctly reiterate Einhorn's doctrine of a personal God, both immanent and transcendent, and fall in line with the traditional Jewish concept of God, differing from Jewish tradition only in the substitution of immortality for resurrection,<sup>a</sup> and the messianic age for the

Messiah. Einhorn's Judaism was always dependent upon a firm belief in an existing and provident God, and upon Israel with a mission.

Einhorn was in many ways a product of the new age, and at the same time part of the old. He represented an era of transition, an age which was immersed in the traditions and customs of the past, and yet, aware of the newer intellectual currents of secular knowledge and science. Einhorn's training was of the yeshiva type, but this training was broadened by secular study, philosophy, literature, and history. In the spirit of his day, Einhorn expressed a firm belief in the progress of humanity and the necessity of a rational, scientific outlook.

Einhorn believed in divine revelation, but his knowledge of history and his belief in the progress of humanity through the ages would not permit him to accept this revelation as something static. Dynamic and integral to the life of our people, the nature of revelation required different forms in different ages -- all in order to effectuate the highest goal, the summit of progress: The Messianic Age. The revelation, revealed by God to the Jewish people set for them their task and their mission, -- to be a priest-people, charged with bringing God's will to fruition upon earth. While others frequently compromised their views for practical purposes, Einhorn never did. His every action was guided by his theological formulations. First and foremost always stood his faith and belief in the living God.

## Kaufmann Kohler

Kaufmann Kohler was the rabbi of two of the outstanding congregations in this country; first Temple Sinai in Chicago and then Beth-El (later merged with Emanu-El) in New York. Then late in life, he succeeded Isaac Mayer Wise as president of the Hebrew Union College. As a congregational rabbi he was one of the leading protagonists of Reform, a spirited fighter who was always eager to plunge into the battle for the new against the old. A collection of his published writings would require many volumes. Not only was he an outstanding Reformer, but he was a scholar of stature. His volume on Jewish Theology has become the standard work on the subject. His historical and critical studies paved the way for others to follow in the modern field of Jewish scholarship.

Kohler's beginnings gave no indication as to his future. He was born (1843) in Fuerth, Bavaria, into a pious Orthodox family with a long rabbinical tradition. His early education followed the usual Orthodox pattern through yeshiva. Then he became a student of Samson Raphael Hirsch, one of the outstanding neo-Orthodox rabbis of Germany. There was in Hirsch much that attracted and influenced the young Kohler, his universalism, optimism, his conception of Judaism as a religion of hope and faith in humanity and humanity's future, and his belief in the mission of Judaism. It was Kohler's university education that broke his tie with romantic traditionalism and began his move towards progressive Liberal Judaism. His doctor's thesis was a scientific work on the Bible based on a historical critical reconstruction of the forty-ninth chapter of Genesis. While his



university experience broke his romantic traditionalism, it did not affect his faith. He lost the fundamentalistic basis for his Judaism, but not his belief. He did not go through the period of skepticism or atheism which we today consider to be almost a natural process for the university student. "I only felt that I had outgrown the romanticism and conservatism of those who adhered to the teachings of the Breslau seminary. So in solitary strength of faith I followed my own ideal of a progressive and liberal Judaism."<sup>1</sup> Dr. Kohler found the Jewish atmosphere in Germany much too confining to permit his liberal expression of the Jewish spirit. It was the scholar Dr. Geiger who "pointed to America as the land of promise for progressive Judaism."<sup>2</sup>

Following Geiger's advice Kohler came to this country and had an outstanding career as a congregational rabbi and was a leading figure in the American reform movement. From the pulpit he engaged actively in polemics and apologetics on behalf of Reform, reaching far below the surface to prove himself a deep thinker and a capable scholar. He was the motivating force in calling the Pittsburgh Conference in 1885 and the chief spokesman at the conference although Isaac M. Wise was the chairman. The platform of the conference was written to show that Reform was within the pale of Judaism despite the claims of its opponents, and to insist that Reform be not the result of accident but of consistent and systematic principles. "Judaism is a historical growth and we must find the focus for all its manifestations, the common fraction in all its diverse expressions and forms. We must accumulate what is essential and vital amid its un-

changing forms and own fluctuating conditions. We must declare before the world what Judaism is and what Reform Judaism aims at."<sup>3</sup> In his leadership at the Pittsburgh Conference and in his sermons Kohler the theologian was being revealed. But it was after he came to the Hebrew Union College as a teacher and its president that he was able to devote himself to study and research in Jewish theology. It was while at the college that he made his great contribution to the field of Jewish theology and wrote his book, Jewish Theology, Systematically and Historically Considered. Dr. Kohler was virtually the first reformer to present a complete survey of Jewish theology both systematically and historically. His book covers every aspect of Jewish theology on both the theoretical and practical sides, yet is amazingly concise. According to Dr. Neumark, "the all important fact is decisive that the presentation itself shows so minute a familiarity with the sources and the scientific literatures devoted to the same, that no scholar ever so great and recognized, is supposed to be possessed of it as long as he did not actually demonstrate it ad oculos."<sup>4</sup>

Dr. Kohler regarded all Judaism in the light of evolutionary science. Its growth and development is a reality which can be traced through the pages of history. "Extending over thirty-five centuries of history and over well-nigh all the lands of the globe, Judaism could not always retain the same form and character. Judaism in its formative period, that is in the patriarchal and prophetic times, differed from exilic and post-exilic Judaism ... Similarly Judaism in the Diaspora, or Hellenistic Judaism, showed great divergences from that of Palestine. So too, the mysticism of the

Orient produced in Germany and France a different form of Judaism from that inculcated by the Arabic philosophy cultivated by the Jews of Spain. Again, many Jews of modern times more or less systematically discard that form of Judaism fixed by the codes and the casuistry of the Middle Ages, and incline toward a Judaism which they hold more in harmony with the requirements of an age of broader culture and larger aims ... In this light Judaism is ... a historic power varying in various epochs."<sup>5</sup> Thus Judaism is a religion which has gone through a process of development in the past and is capable of further evolution. It is a mobile and not a fixed faith. It was the recognition of this principle of development at work in Judaism from earliest times and the awareness of the constant changes and adaptations to fluctuating Judaism that motivated Dr. Kohler to desire to rename the movement of which he was such a vital part "Progressive Judaism" rather than Reform. For Dr. Kohler the essence of Reform was progress. His great contribution to Reform was this emphasis on evolution and development or what has been called "Historical Reform,"<sup>6</sup> a Judaism rooted in the past, recognizing its historical identity and continually, adapting constantly to new conditions and new thought but remaining a link in the chain of tradition. In a series of sermons entitled "Backwards or Forwards" delivered in 1885 in response to a number of pulpit attacks on Reform by Dr. Alexander Kohut, who was then the leading rabbi of the Conservative movement in New York, Kohler emphasized this link with the past and at the same time pointed out that Judaism cannot live in or for the past. "We certainly owe reverence and gratitude to our fathers; we ought to honor our sacred bequest of the ages. But does

he honor his father better who leaves the inherited estate unimproved and shut up from the influence of modernizing culture, thus allowing it to decay? Or is it not more in accordance with true filial love to have it constantly embellished and improved in value and appearance so as to perpetuate the memory of its first owner? ... We must want Judaism to be the exponent of a religious truth for all ages and climes ... We ought not to be satisfied with erecting monuments of piety to our forefathers, but should aim to continue their legacy, and to perpetuate their spirit in and through our lives."<sup>7</sup> Kohler traces his concept of Judaism back to the work of Abraham Geiger and his historical studies which showed the various movements in Judaism such as Prophetism, Mosaism, Pharisaism and Rabbinism to be the result of different historical forces influencing each different age. "It is the recognition and application to our own time of this principle of progress and reform that constitutes the essence of Reform Judaism and forms the keynote of the Reform movement."<sup>8</sup> Reform did not grow up in a vacuum ~~but~~ in the minds of a few dedicated or inspired men, but was the necessary outcome of the age of evolution. Darwin, Hegel, and Feuerbach were as much responsible for Reform as were the leaders within the movement. Kohler recognized, explained, interpreted, and systematized what was taking place. Utilizing the forces at work on and within Judaism he was able to shape its form in his day and to find within it a living and vital faith for the Jewish people of his time, recognizing the national and universal, rational and ritual expressions as products of the forces at work in different periods. "But one thing is clear," according to Dr. Kohler, "the core and center and purpose of Judaism ...

is the doctrine of the One only holy God and of the upbuilding and spread of His kingdom of truth, righteousness, and peace in the world, and the development and propagation of that doctrine is indissolubly linked with it as the historic mission of the Jewish people."<sup>9</sup>

Judaism is a progressive religion in the sense that it has passed through a process of evolution, and a vital faith as it seeks to bring God enthroned on high down to the hearts of man.

"Religion humanized and humanity religionized -- that is the aim, the beginning and the end of Judaism, as Reform understands and expounds it. Nowhere has Judaism better chances of becoming the pioneer of a humanitarian religion, nowhere can Jewish faith venture to be the advocate of the broadest truths concerning God and man ..."<sup>10</sup>

In his catechism, Manual for Religious Instruction, Dr. Kohler writes that religion is in essence a consciousness of God, fear of God, love of God, faith in God, and worship of God.<sup>11</sup> Judaism is a special covenant of God and man, a special relationship with God, which is eventually to include all men. The essence of Judaism is its lofty conception of the Deity, its "guardianship of the pure monotheistic faith; and this implied the intellectual and spiritual elaboration as well as the defense of the same throughout the centuries against all powers and systems of paganism or semi-paganism, and amidst all the struggles and sufferings which such an unyielding and uncompromising attitude of a small minority entailed."<sup>12</sup> The pagan gods as well as the pagan element in the Christian trinity are the "outcome of the human spirit going astray in its search for God."<sup>13</sup> Instead of leading man upwards towards God and the higher moral life, paganism actually did just the opposite. Therefore from the outset Judaism fought

an unrelenting war on behalf of its concept of Deity against all other gods. Judaism maintained an attitude of rigid exclusion and religious separatism. In the process the Jewish idea of God grew and developed as much in opposition to the depravity resulting from pagan polytheism as from internal forces. The end result was the recognition of the moral nature of the one God. Since the time of the prophets Judaism has had no nationalistic concept of deity. In this and many other ways the Jewish concept of deity differed from that of the other peoples. However before we deal at length with the <sup>nat</sup>nature of attributes of God, in order to treat the subject systematically as Kohler himself did, it is first necessary to ask how we know about God, how we know that He exists, and what is it possible for us to know about God.

Dr. Kohler does not begin with philosophical arguments or proofs for the existence of God. Quite to the contrary, he states that "for the religious consciousness, God is not to be demonstrated by argument, but is a fact of inner<sup>ad</sup> outer experience. Whatever the origin and nature of the cosmos may be according to natural science, the soul of man<sup>N</sup> follows its natural bent ... to look through nature to the Maker ... who uses the manifold world of nature only as His workshop ... The entire cosmic life points to a Supreme Being from whom all existence must have arisen, and without whom life and process would be impossible."<sup>14</sup> Because man is born into a society, his religious thinking does not begin with a tabula rasa, as it were, but his thinking is conditioned and influenced by the prevalent monotheistic conceptions of deity<sup>ITY</sup>. In the same manner as Scheirmacher, Kohler goes deeper than this thinking



into the psychological basis for belief. Like Schleiermacher he declares that "far more original and potent in man is the feeling of limitation and dependency."<sup>15</sup> This causes Him to feel the existence of a higher power which he first approaches with fear and trembling, and then with awe and reverence. With the increase of self-awareness man develops will and purpose of his own which quite frequently comes into contact with a will stronger than his own to which he must yield. This, according to Kohler, is how man becomes conscious of duty, of moral "ought" and "ought not." This is not a purely external physical limitation like the earlier, but it is moral and internal. "It is the sense of duty, or, as <sup>we</sup> call it, conscience, the sense of right and wrong." In his chapter on "Consciousness of God and Belief in God" in Jewish Theology, Kohler writes that "it is mainly through the conscience that man becomes conscious of God."<sup>16</sup> This is in line with the Kantian postulate that it would be a betrayal of man's moral nature if there were no God, that we can know God's existence only through ethics. Kant's development of this argument is slightly different than Kohler's. Kant reasons that the moral law demands justice. Only Providence can insure this, and has evidently not insured it in this life. Therefore there is a God and a future life. On the other hand Kohler starts not with the <sup>old</sup> moral law, but with man, who "sees himself, a moral being, guided by motives which lend a purpose to his acts and his omissions," and thus feels that this purpose of his must somehow be in accord with a higher purpose, that of a Power who directs and controls the whole of life. The more he sees purpose ruling individuals and nations, the more will his God-consciousness grow into the conviction that there is but One and

Only God who in awful grandeur holds dominion over the world."<sup>17</sup>

This is the process of development of God-consciousness in man, not through reason, but through man's moral nature. In the Scriptures it is assumed that man will arrive at belief in God through his consciousness of God which is the result of his inner experiences. Therefore in the Bible there is to be found no argument for the existence of God or any dogma requiring a belief in Him. Rather the certainty of God's existence is implicit in almost every verse. Using the historical approach<sup>from which</sup> the almost departs, Kohler shows how the contact of Judaism with Greek philosophy<sup>made</sup> necessary the adopting of the philosophical proofs for the existence of God. He discusses the cosmological, teleological, and ontological proofs and shows how they<sup>were</sup> all invalidated by Immanuel Kant who demonstrates that all of the metaphysical arguments have no basis. Dr. Kohler seems to accept Kant's thesis,<sup>m</sup> mentioned above, that the consciousness of our moral obligation or duty, implicitly requires a moral order and postulates the existence of God. But he admits that this proof too would be inadequate to convince a skeptic or unbeliever. It is in Judaism<sup>s</sup> ha Levi that Kohler finds what is for him the satisfactory answer, that the prime assurance of the existence of God is "the historical fact of the divine revelation. As a matter of fact, reason alone will not lead to God, except where religious intuition forms, so to speak, the ladder of heaven, leading to the realm of unknowable. .. Religion alone, founded upon divine revelation, can teach<sup>m</sup> us to find a God, to whom he can appeal in trust in his moments of trouble or of woe, and whose will he can see in the dictates of conscience and the destiny of nations."<sup>18</sup> According to Kohler modern

thinking and scientific research also follow the historical method in tracing the growth of ideas and material objects in relation to certain fixed laws. For him the process of evolution points to the existence of a "Supreme Power and Energy."

Here our source of knowledge about God is through historical revelation. Revelation has two aspects: self-revelation of God, "the appearance of God upon the background of the soul, which reflects Him like a mirror;" and the revelation of His will, "the Law as emanating from God" or Torah.<sup>19</sup> The divine revelation in Judaism is unique in that it is revelation through a people (cf. Judah ha Levi) rather than only through a select individual or individuals. "It is an indisputable fact of history that the Jewish people, on account of its peculiar religious bent, was predestined to be the people of revelation."<sup>20</sup> This revelation through or in the people of Israel was never a fait accompli, it was not a single act but a continuing process of development, depending on the degree of culture and insight of the people. "Divine revelation is not a matter of the past ... but is a constant unfolding of truth and knowledge."<sup>21</sup> This of course applies also to scriptural revelation which also underwent the process of growth and development. Thus whether man comes to a knowledge of God's existence from some inner experience or as the result of revelation, it is obvious that belief comes before any logical demonstration of his existence. This by no means implies that reason took a back seat in the theology of Kohler. Rather the reason is always present as a touchstone for every concept, but not as a source for our knowledge about God. "God is felt and worshipped first as the supreme power in the world, before man per-

ceives Him as the highest ideal of morality. Order and nature corroborate this innate belief in God. Not philosophy but religion can teach man to find a God. Reason must serve as a corrective for the contents of revelation, but it can never be the final source of truth."<sup>22</sup> Judaism refuses to hold on to any doctrine which contradicts the findings of reason. Regardless of the source of knowledge, it must stand the test of reason. "Any belief which conflicts with truth, as we conceive it, is therefore rejected by Judaism."<sup>23</sup> In one of his opening day addresses at the Hebrew Union College, Dr. Kohler listed rationality as one of the four characteristic traits of Judaism. It is thus lifted from the position of being a mere check for the contents of revelation to being an integral part of our religion. "The bright jewel of Jewish doctrine is its being in full accord with the dictates of reason, its constant appeal to the intellect and the common sense of man. Not that religious truth is the outcome of pure reasoning, the result of philosophical speculation. Religion is always rooted in the soul, a matter of profound sentiment and deep emotion. God appeals to the heart before he appeals to the mind. But the unique grandeur of Judaism consists in the fact that it never presented itself as blind belief, spurning or condemning inquiry and free thought ... as the human mind progresses with each generation of seers and thinkers, so did the Jewish truth, ever allying itself anew with the thought and knowledge of the time and environment."<sup>24</sup> Thus we come to know God through our inner psychological experiences, from external revelations which came to us through scriptures and continue in every generation and which constantly must stand the test of reason to

insure their validity. However it must be remembered that reason is always secondary to belief, which is the existential reality of Judaism. It is on belief that the Jewish doctrine of God primarily depends.

Likewise through reason we cannot come to know the exact nature of God, His attributes and essential qualities. Rather reason shows that God is unknowable to man, that His essence must always remain hidden from man. Yet man cannot relate himself to a total unknown. "A divinity void of all essential qualities fails to satisfy the religious soul."<sup>25</sup> Such a God would be that of the Deists, who in their cold-rationality stripped Him of all personality, and made God a remote and impersonal force in life. Kohler would not accept such a concept of deity, and at one time waged a cross-country battle with Isaac Mayer Wise, Kohler defending the "Personal God." Wise in his Cosmic God had described a rather impersonal sort of deity who was more a Cosmic Force than a personality. Kohler insisted that this was contrary to the Jewish concept of God. In scriptures God frequently speaks in the first person. "This word I lifts God at once above all beings and powers of the cosmos, in fact, above all other existence, for it expresses His unique self-consciousness ... God is not merely the supreme Being, but also the supreme Self-consciousness."<sup>26</sup> Kohler rejected Ritschl's claim that God could achieve self-consciousness only through the perfect man (i.e. Jesus), that otherwise he is completely immanent, completely at one with the world.

Kohler carried his battle for the "personal God" to the



Anglo-Jewish press. The Jewish Times carried a series of his articles entitled "For or Against the Personal God" which were direct answers to the articles which were being published in the Israelite at that time. Kohler felt that God was being blasphemed in Wise's articles. Furthermore Wise was misinterpreting the authorities with "conscious falsification" to "bear testimony to the lie" that God is not personal. Kohler demonstrated that he was able to go beyond this level of "ad hominem" argument to prove his point. He points out that in scriptures, for Moses and the prophets, God was a personality and not an abstraction. He maintains that it was only natural that many human passions were attributed to God, but this in no way affects the argument. Kohler always speaks as both the theologian and the ardent believer. This is evident when he describes God speaking to man and in man, appearing to the human personality as a higher universal and spiritual personality. It is the "living God whose voice we hear today yet in our hearts; it is the God, the sublime eminent personality, who to our self-consciousness is a Higher Divine Consciousness, who hears us when we pray ... who has mercy with us when we suffer."<sup>27</sup> Kohler has a clear concept of what he intends by the term personality. Any being which can determine its own actions and its own destiny in accordance with its own motives is a personality. Because God has the most complete possible consciousness of self, "therefore God, is the highest, fullest, living personality." Dr. Kohler does not rely solely upon his own interpretations of scriptures, his own analysis of Judaism, or his own concept of Jewish theology. Rather he quotes the



men whom he considered to be the leading Jewish thinkers among his contemporaries, to show that they also considered the Jewish concept of God to include the idea of personality. He quoted Dr. Aub in his Wissenschaftliche Grundlegung des Mosaischen Religion who refers to a personality existing God; Einhorn's reference to God as "highest reality and personality" in his "Principle of Mosaism," and Geiger's History of Judaism which calls God the "only full, living personality." He also has substantial excerpts from Dr. Samuel Hirsch and Dr. Ludwig Philipsohn to show that they too regarded God as personality.<sup>28</sup> Kohler won his battle, and preserved for Reform Jewish Theology in his time the "Personal God." The amazing thing is that his arguments still seem cogent when read today. The Personal God rests at the center of Kohler's theology, not only for philosophical reasons, but because this is its place in Jewish tradition and it is essential for the modern Jewish worshipper.

Dr. Kohler's approach to the other attributes or qualities of God is similar. He shows the necessity of the particular attribute for the believer, and traces the historical development of the idea in Judaism. Thus again we can see that Dr. Kohler's interest does not lie in philosophical abstractions as much as in the existential reality of Jewish beliefs. This is the reason that Dr. Kohler will start his discussion of an attribute by showing its psychological basis, then continue by showing its origin and development in Judaism. His evolutionary attitude towards Judaism evidences itself as he traces the forces that affected the development of some idea, bringing it from the scriptures, through the rabbis and philosophers, down to the present time and its place in his own thinking. This technique

inevitably stresses the strong link of the present with the past. His own theology remains very much a part of Jewish theology. Reform never appears as a schism, but as a natural development of historical Judaism. To illustrate a point Kohler will frequently quote from scriptures or the rabbis. Sentences from the liturgy are often used as evidence of a Jewish belief. These are not meant for logical proofs, but as positive demonstrations that some idea is a traditional and essential part of Jewish theology.

Dr. Kohler divides the attributes of God into two types, metaphysical ones and those derived from man's moral nature. The first group is more concerned with God's relation to the world at large, the second with his relationship to man. The first group describes a Deity who is transcendental, remote, unreachable and unknowable; the second a God who is immanent, makes His will known to man, and is directly concerned with man's behavior. The metaphysical attributes are derived or inferred from God's manifestations in His creation, the others are a result of Judaism's investing "holiness" with a moral connotation.

Among the metaphysical attributes of deity are such concepts as unity, omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, and eternity, and transcendence. Kohler insists <sup>on</sup> upon the transcendancy of God, and stays away from anything that suggests pantheism, which he calls pagan. God is the Creator, separate and apart from his creation. Yet although God is in every sense transcendent, this does not eliminate his close relationship with man. The Deistic view is that God is outside of the world, beyond the universe, and not working within it. However Judaism, according to Kohler, main-

tains that God is both transcendent and immanent. "God is in all; He is over all."<sup>29</sup>

In developing the idea of the Unity of God, as in the case of the other attributes, Dr. Kohler uses an historical approach. He shows how the concept develops as a result of inner growth within Judaism, and as a result of the outside influence of the pagan world with which Judaism constantly came into contact. Contrary to the claim of the Orthodox, "Judaism did not begin as an abstract or absolute monotheism arrived at by philosophical speculation (or revelation) and dogmatic in its character."<sup>30</sup> However from the first Judaism did insist on only one Deity for the Jewish people. As the evolutionary process continued, this one Jewish God, became the One God of all the universe. After the return from the exile this was emphasized by Deutero-Isaiah. In contact with Greek culture, in Alexandria the doctrine of the unity of God became a matter of philosophical reason. In contact with Persian dualism it became a necessary foundation of Jewish ethics to have one God who controlled both good and evil. Dr. Kohler, who is polemical, wherever necessary, stresses the difference between the purity of Jewish monotheism and Christian trinitarianism. He shows that the reason for the adoption of the Maimonidean creed into the liturgy was its polemical emphasis on the absolute unity of God. This is one concept that constantly grew and was strengthened within Judaism, until it has become such a necessity that it is universally accepted.

Kohler seems to go directly to Schleiermacher for his psychological explanation of the reason men assign omnipotence to God.

"Among all the emotions which underlie our God consciousness the fore-

most is the realization of our own weakness and helplessness. This makes us long for One mightier than ourselves ... The first attribute, therefore, with which we feeble mortals invest our Deity is impotence."<sup>31</sup> Kohler traces the development of the idea of ascribing power to deity from the pagan religions and into Judaism. God's power is evident in His creation, and is also manifest in history. The only limitation Kohler places upon God's power is His will which is determined by his Knowledge and "His moral self-restraint." Linked closely with the attribute of omnipotence is therefore omniscience. God's knowledge like His power is without limitation. However God is in a sense limited by law (natural or cosmic) which is in itself an expression of His will. Where it is possible to raise many philosophical problems involving omnipotence and omniscience, Kohler seems to anticipate these problems in his strong reminder that man's knowledge and God's are qualitatively different. The problems arise when it is assumed that knowledge when applied to God means the same as when applied to man. "With God all knowledge is complete; there is no growth of knowledge from yesterday to today, no knowledge of only a part instead of the whole of the world."<sup>32</sup> If God's knowledge and his power are not limited by time and space, then it follows that he must also be omnipresent and eternal, although this also is of course the result of many steps in the growth of Jewish theology from the primitive concept of a deity who has a specific dwelling place to a God who cannot be contained by the whole universe. Dr. Kohler points out that omnipresence is necessary for the God of religion (in contrast to that of philosophy) who "must partake of the knowledge and the feelings of His worshipper, must know his every impulse and idea, and must feel with him in his suffering and need."<sup>33</sup>

God transcends time as well as space. A corollary of eternity is immutability. He must transcend the changes and conditions of time and himself be unchanging. These then are the essential metaphysical attributes of God according to Kohler's division.

The second group of attributes are, according to Kohler, derived from man's moral nature. Because man is moral, therefore the Deity is moral. This is reminiscent of Kant who begins with man, his conscience, his awareness of the moral law, and his sense of duty, and then from these derives Deity. In a more limited sphere, Kohler begins with man's moral nature and derives the moral nature of God. This however was not a universal process. "Judaism alone fully realized the moral nature of the Deity; this was done by investing the term "holiness" with the idea of moral perfection, so that God became the ideal and pattern of the loftiest morality."<sup>34</sup> Holiness is no mere metaphysical concept of ritual demand (i.e. Levitical holiness) but is the principle and source of all ethics. All purpose and value in life come from the concept of holiness. Thus for Kohler the central commandment in Judaism becomes "Ye shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy."<sup>35</sup> It is here more than any other place that we can see that, for Kohler, God is not merely a metaphysical concept, but is woven into the whole texture of Jewish living and thinking. Leading an ethical life is synonymous with God consciousness. It is all a result of this ethical conception of holiness which is a derivation from the moral nature of God. Because it is arrived at originally from man's moral nature does not mean that God, as the humanists would have us believe, is the projection of man's goals and aspirations, the summation of his ideals. Rather "God is the very power of Morality. He is not merely an

Ideal of Justice and Purity, conceived of by the Jewish seers, lacking reality, not a mere "similie," a product of human fancy, existing only in the realm of imagination. He is the Power that speaks through the conscience and reason to man as the great "I am;" the Mind that rules our mind, the Will that dictates our will, the Judge and surveyor of our conduct, high above nature, which is unconscious and above nature, which exists only as an aggregate of individuals yet enthroned, as King and Father in every human soul."<sup>36</sup> Thus holiness, that is morals, becomes a religious term rather than a philosophical one. God's perfect goodness is a religious postulate. Philosophy raises, and cannot answer, ~~many~~<sup>many</sup> questions around this point. Kohler answers with the Danish philosopher Rauwenhoff that "there is no comparison of higher or lesser degree possible between mankind which, even in its noblest types, must wrestle with the power of evil,<sup>6</sup> and God, in whom nothing can be imagined which would even suggest the possibility of any moral shortcoming or imperfection."<sup>37</sup>

The rest of God's moral attributes are a direct outgrowth of His holiness, the first manifestation of which is his indignation at falsehood and violence. When man speaks of God's anger, he is merely feeling the moral force of divine holiness. It is the force which can purge the soul from evil. But the God of Judaism does not merely condemn the sinner. Rather we speak of God's long-suffering and mercy. "It holds forth the promise of God's forbearance to man in his shortcomings, due to His compassion on the weakness of flesh and blood. He waits for man, erring and stumbling, until by striving and struggling he shall attain a higher state of purity. This is the



bright, uplifting side of the Jewish idea of the divine holiness."<sup>38</sup>

For Judaism this divine grace is not dependent upon the acceptance of a creed, but is a manifestation of God's mercy, which must have as its corollary the attribute of Justice. It is fundamental to Judaism that God cannot act unjustly. It is a sense of this divine justice which makes it possible for man to fight wrong. The idea of divine justice is revealed in our concept of the world as it should be. Dr. Kohler places tremendous stress on the importance of justice as the high point of Jewish ethics. It is important here to quote his words which might appear distasteful to some, but which illustrate how strongly he felt about justice: "... the highest principle of ethics in Judaism, the cardinal point in the government of the world, is not love, but justice. Love has the tendency to undermine the right and to effeminize society. Justice, on the other hand, develops the moral capacity of every man; it aims not merely to avoid wrong, but to promote and develop the right for the sake of the perfect state of morality."<sup>39</sup> Justice for Kohler is not merely punitive, but is a positive force for the right.

However this does not rule out God's love and compassion for Kohler. Love is a supplement of justice, not a higher attribute counteracting it. "The divine plan of salvation demands redeeming love which wins humanity step by step for higher moral ends."<sup>40</sup> Divine love is an expression of the close relationship between God and man. It is the love of a father for his children. It is not the sole principle of life, as expressed by the Church, but must always be guided by justice.

Thus for Kohler, the God concept is essential to the moral

life. He does not search for God through philosophical reasoning, but through the psychological needs of man and through Jewish tradition. The God concept is not a creation of man to give meaning to his strivings, but life gains purpose from God. The world itself is not the work of mere chance nor life the mere wanderings of man through time and space. Rather the world has design and life is full of moral purpose for there is a Designer and a moral Ruler.<sup>41</sup> This close relationship between God and man, between a holy God and a moral life, is seen in the most beautiful section of the Union Prayer Book, the N'ehah service for Yom Kippur, which is the work of Dr. Kohler. With poetic beauty man's feeling of dependence on God is expressed throughout this section. Because of the nature of the service God's mercy and his saving grace are repeatedly emphasized. In this service Kohler the ardent believer reveals himself. And thus is revealed the significance of the God concept to Kohler. It is essential to him as a Jew for an ethical life and for a Jewish life.

## Samuel Hirsch

### Philosopher of Reform Judaism

Samuel Hirsch has been called the prophet and the philosopher of Reform Judaism. It is impossible to study the development of Reform Judaism and not be impressed with the tremendous influence that Hirsch had in his own time and on the later evolution of Reform. Although some of his thinking is out-of-date, there is much in his writings that is of significance for modern Judaism. Hirsch was a radical reformer, and would be considered as such by many even today. But his radicalism was by no means mere extremism or sensationalism, but the result of a well-developed philosophy of Judaism. In his books, Religionsphilosophie der Juden (1842) and Die Humanität als Religion he proved himself to be an original thinker and demonstrated his originality later in his Katechismus der Israelitischen Religion in his interpretation of Biblical legends and Jewish ceremonials in an allegorical and symbolic manner. His Religionsphilosophie was written in reaction to Hegel's claim that Christianity was the Absolute religion. In it Hirsch refuted the inferiority of Judaism to Christianity. His radical view towards ceremonials was evident in Die Humanität als Religion.

In Hirsch's thinking, God is always by implication at the center, but the attention is directed towards man. It would be almost meaningless to abstract Hirsch's God idea from his philosophy without also considering his Doctrine of Man. It is almost impossible to discuss his God concept on a purely metaphysical level, to separate it from the life of man. Because his God concept is so inextricably

tied up with his doctrine of man, at times it seems as if Hirsch is a humanist, in the modern non-theistic sense of the word. In his introduction to the series of lectures entitled, "The Religion of Humanity" which he delivered at the Masonic Lodge in Luxemburg in the year 1853-1854, Hirsch wrote: "Religion is anthropology -- it is the expression of the inner most essence of Man and all Humanity."<sup>1</sup> Thus Hirsch begins with the nature of man, with Feuerbach's dictum that "theology is anthropology; the doctrine of God is the doctrine of Man." This does not rule out God in any sense. Rather it implies that we know of God only as much as man in his finite being can know of Him, and as much as it is good for man to know. Hirsch recognized that in Judaism itself the cardinal preoccupation is not with God, but Man. God does not exist in the realm of logic, nor do we know about Him through some vague announcement of super-human revelation, but God is with us. The knowledge of God is within man's heart and nowhere else.<sup>2</sup> This type of thinking is not a product of the age of reason, but rather a romantic reaction to it. It is in the romantic period of which Hirsch was a part that this emphasis on humanity became so pronounced. But the romantic period alone does not explain Hirsch. He cannot be understood without Hegel.

Samuel Hirsch was a philosopher ~~and~~<sup>who</sup> wanted the whole of Judaism interpreted in philosophical terms. It was only natural that he should fall under the spell of Hegel, for at that time Hegel was synonymous with philosophy. As Dr. Cohon wrote, "Hegel was absolute monarch in the realm of European philosophy. His word was law."<sup>3</sup> However, although Hirsch begins with Hegel, the master's word is not law for him. Hirsch accepts much of Hegel, but refutes him on

Jewish grounds. He uses Hegel's dialectic method, his terminology and his logic, to refute Hegel's claim that the absolute religious truth belongs to the synthesis of experience and the Idea in the triumph of Christianity rather than to Judaism's God. Hegel considered history to be the continuous self-unfoldment of the Absolute Spirit, a perpetual self-realization of God. Reality is a logical process of evolution. As God revealed more and more of himself through history there has been a constant evolution or development, continually moving towards absolutes. If one regards history as the continuous self-enfoldment of the Absolute Spirit, it could be concluded that whatever is, therefore must be rational and reasonable.<sup>4</sup> As mentioned above, Hirsch's Religionphilosophie (1842) sought to prove that Christianity was not the absolute religious truth. In this earlier writing, Hirsch rejected the findings of scientific Biblical criticism and took an Orthodox attitude towards the Bible on the basis of Hegel's philosophy. The Bible was an existing reality, and as such must be rational and reasonable. It was later that Hirsch discovered that the Hegelian doctrine, that is Hegel's application of the concept of evolution to life and thought, logically implied an incentive and justification for Reform<sup>and</sup> progress. The concept of God coming to self-realization through the historic process is actually revolutionary in nature. Hegel taught that God was constantly unfolding himself in an uninterrupted impulse to self-realization. The full impact of this of which Hirsch became aware, is that what is now<sup>is</sup> only temporary. What exists in the present is not the full measure of the divine. Progress, that is change from a lower to a higher order, is the very strength of God's realization, of his revelation through history. Judaism therefore is not

a static religion, but a dynamic phenomenon. Judaism did not stop its development at any one point in history, be it the completion of the Bible or the redaction of the talmud. The Bible had not created Judaism, but Judaism had created the Bible. Because Judaism is a religion for man, and because of the evolutionary principle which Hirsch derived from Hegel's philosophy, it is to be expected that Judaism should constantly change and progress in accordance with changing conditions and environments. This is the historic view which takes into account continued growth and development. Dr. Kohler, in his historical study of Samuel Hirsch, lists three fundamental ideas of Hirsch which grew out of his concept of God as the God of history who reveals Himself through man. These ideas which made Hirsch a reformer and an anti-Hegelian are: "First, Judaism is not a creed which shackles the intellect, but a doctrine (Lehre-Torah) which frees the mind and leads to the pure and absolute truth; second, Religion means service, not servitude and blind obedience; third, Religion is forward-looking life, not backward gazing stability."<sup>5</sup>

In his series of lectures "The Religion of Humanity" Hirsch develops his philosophy of religion. These lectures are noteworthy for his systematic exposition of his liberal religious outlook. But they are even more remarkable when the content is considered with the make-up of the audience in mind. Dr. Hirsch gave these lectures before the Masonic lodge in Luxemburg. The lodge must have been almost entirely made up of Christians. It is impossible to imagine a contemporary audience of laymen today listening to a series of lectures on such a high plane intellectually. In Dr. Hirsch's own time, it is remarkable to imagine a group of Christians, who must have had a rather traditional



religious background, listening to his liberal religious philosophy, to his lectures setting forth the thesis that there is not one human thought in Christianity not <sup>also</sup> found in Judaism, to his proofs that Christianity is not the Absolute religion as Hegel declared. Dr. Hirsch in his lectures outlined the historical development of <sup>all</sup> religions which he maintained was the key to religious differences. The end result of this development, he claimed to be the religion of humanity. It is this religion of humanity which he developed so beautifully in these lectures. <sup>Adm.</sup> of course, for Dr. Hirsch <sup>Judaism</sup> was conceived of as the pure religion of humanity, the all interlinking religion and philosophy which has as its purpose to teach man his duty.

The fundamental concept of Judaism, that is of the religion of humanity, is that man is created in the image of God. Man is a God-like <sup>E</sup>being. The God likeness in man is his capacity for freedom and harmony. Freedom is <sup>for</sup> Hirsch man's living in accordance with the will of God, in accordance with the knowledge of truth <sup>and</sup> right placed in the conscience by God. God is both in all and over all. He is the creator of everything. Before his audience of Masons Hirsch describes God with a term which would be rich with meaning for them. He calls God the Masterbuilder of the universe. Because God is the Masterbuilder, His work must therefore be perfect. He is the perfect Creator of a perfect creation. It therefore follows that the concept of original sin which was so important to Hegel cannot be valid, rather man must be perfect as he is a part of God's perfect creation.

But how do we come to know of this God whom Hirsch describes?

Is it through revelation, reason, or nature? Hirsch claims that we come to know truth in our hearts. Truth is another name for God; it is the seal of God. There is not a period in history that possesses the complete and entire truth. That of course is a logical outcome of the concept of God's gradually revealing Himself in history. But in every period the human mind and the human heart are the only means of producing truth. Error is the result of the misconceptions of the mind which frequently errs. Truth is correctly interpreted only in the heart. The individual today can find truth, that is find God as he has been found throughout the ages. Abraham many centuries ago found God just as every person that seeks Him can find Him. Abraham was instructed by his own heart, just as everyone of us can instruct himself. This goes back to Hirsch's thesis that in religion the place to begin is with man. God is within man, Man can find God if he looks within his heart. The Jewish God is not a remote and abstract transcendental deity. Rather it is as we read in the Talmud, that God is present in every praying congregation, wherever any court (beth din) is assembled, with every two persons who engage in discussion of Torah, and even with every individual. God is everywhere, wherever the human heart turns to Him. It is reminiscent of Feuerbach when Hirsch defines God as "one expression satisfying all the cravings and needs of the human heart."<sup>5</sup> But this is in no way with Hirsch a denial of a God existing independent of man. It is merely a reflection of Hirsch's belief that there is only one starting point in religion, -- man. We come to know God through the needs that we feel. But God is more than a reflection of these needs. Hirsch's

emphasis on the human heart as the source of knowledge of God might well be a reflection of the romantic reaction to the age of reason. Nowhere in Hirsch's writings does he present logical demonstrations as a proof of the existence of God.

God cannot be proven by logical syllogisms. Rather He is to be found within the human heart. The traditional logical proofs for the existence of God were meant to correct the results of erring reason; not to check, correct, or prove the knowledge of God that comes from the heart. Hirsch follows Kant in presenting each of the traditional philosophical proofs for the existence of God, the cosmological, teleological, and ontological proofs, and then presents the refutation of each proof. However after going through each of the standard proofs and pointing out its lack of validity, Hirsch does not then seek to present a proof from his own thinking. Rather Hirsch insists that it is superfluous to furnish proofs for the existence of God. "It is a misleading expression if proofs are sought. No proof is needed for the existence of God." Hirsch continues in a rather logical vein, "Being is the first destiny of all of us ... If anything exists, then such existence is also the being and becoming of God."<sup>7</sup> But Hirsch does not develop this point any further. He maintains his original interest in man, and regards the problem of existence of God from the standpoint of man and his needs. The problem therefore is not whether God exists or not, but why does man ask the question? Why is he concerned with the problem of existence? What kind of answer does he really want? Hirsch is certainly correct in his conclusion that with the possible exception of

the theologian and the philosopher, man is not seeking a logical demonstration of God's existence. When we ask "Is there a God?" we actually mean "what is God to us?" We want to know what the relation of God to humanity is, and His significance in our own experiences and those of world history. This approach of Hirsch to the question of God's existence should not be allowed to overshadow the tremendous differences between his concept of "The Religion of Humanity" and the modern school of humanism. True enough there is a confusion in terminology and both do begin with man, but Hirsch's religion is always God centered even though his attention and his interest is directed to man. Hirsch is always more deeply concerned with life than with metaphysics. Nevertheless the driving force is the belief in God which is in his heart.

Hirsch does not overlook the philosophy of naturalism which claims to find God in nature. This is a point of view held by many who are not philosophers. They declare that in the beauties of nature they find positive proof of a creator, that the manifestation of the hand of God in His creation serves as a proof of his existence. The beauty of the stars in the sky and the order of the solar system likewise proclaim the existence of God. However Hirsch asserts that it is impossible to find God in nature. Neither examining that which is far off in a telescope or that which is near with a microscope can reveal God to us or provide a proof of his existence, "unless he who uses the instrument has already found God."<sup>8</sup> Where then could he have found God? Only within his own heart. For God can be found only within us, within the human heart and the mind. As he frequently does, and this is not to be

wondered at considering the nature of his audience, Hirsch finishes his argument with a quotation from the Christian scriptures. "Behold the Kingdom of God is within you."<sup>9</sup> For Hirsch there is no doubt that if the belief is not already within the heart no proof of demonstration of God's existence will be convincing; if the belief is in the heart, none will be needed.

The exaltation of man and center of interest in man is a fundamental principle of Judaism which is already found in the Bible. Man is the ruler of the earth.<sup>10</sup> God the creator made man in His own image. Therefore man like God is also a creator. Man therefore is destined to work, to do the work of his own free choice. It is the capacity to do work that, in Hirsch's mind, distinguishes man from animals. Not only does man have the capacity to work, but he has the capacity for cooperative endeavor. If man is to have dominion over the earth as Genesis suggests, man must depend on the cooperation of his fellows. Rousseau spoke of man as a child of nature who could find his greatest degree of self-realization when living in nature. But Hirsch was opposed to this doctrine of Rousseau. He felt that the only possibility for man to live a human life is in society. Man is essentially a social animal, both through choice and by necessity. In society man has the greatest opportunity for developing his God-like qualities and performing his creative duties. Living in Society, all men are equal. When Hirsch speaks of equality, he does it in a rather original manner for a theologian. He speaks in terms one would expect from a Socialist. It is likely that he took his concept of equality from the socialist movement which was just beginning at this period. According to Hirsch our

equality has its basis in the equal validity of all social work. Any individual who is working according to his ability and his choice is exhibiting the same sense of duty. The doctor or lawyer and the tailor or shoemaker are all doing honorable work, each equality valid, each is important. Man in many ways is a dual being, both animal and intellectual. His reasoning facilities are only satisfied through productive activity. That is through doing the work of his choice. Man was created for freedom, not for caprice. Man finds this freedom within himself, and feels above him the power that gave him freedom, a being that is the principle of freedom. This being of necessity has power over everything; man calls it God. God is absolutely free. For God does only His will. Because man is created in God's image, his freedom is of the same nature. For man absolute freedom is following the will of God as embedded on his conscience as his own will. It is the duty of man to struggle upwards to this absolute freedom. Hirsch regarded Judaism as a discipline toward attaining this absolute freedom. Hirsch defined religion as the realizing of his nature, that is of his freedom, by man. The faculty to do this comes from God as a gift.

The gift of freedom comes from a loving God. God loves and does not hate.<sup>11</sup> To man God offers happiness, which is the freedom to work and to obtain perfect satisfaction through work. Hirsch's approach to the problem of temptation and sin is interesting in the way that it is linked to his concept of freedom and duty. The purpose of life is work. Temptation is necessary to keep man constantly vigilant so that he will not slacken from his duty. If he fails to listen to the warning of temptation, he will fall into wickedness



which is almost equated with laziness or neglect of work. In Hegel's philosophy of religion, sin is considered to be a necessity. Sin is necessary to attain virtue, which is the salvation from sin. Christianity is built upon the doctrine of hereditary sin. Hirsch completely rejects the Hegelian and Christian doctrine. For him sin is never a necessity, but always a possibility.

While in his earlier writings Hirsch stressed the idea of freedom, in his later writings the emphasis is on harmony. There harmony is the nature of man. Man attains harmony within himself with the consciousness of having done his duty. Man must also find harmony with nature and in humanity. The latter results if every man does his duty, in which case all men will form one unity. Harmony exists even where the evil opposes the good "for evil will perish by itself and good will rise to flourish to greater perfection."<sup>12</sup> The Divine life is harmony, both in the life of the world at large and in individuals. Not only is good truth and freedom as mentioned above, but God is also harmony, but not in the sense that God is only the harmony as recognized in the self-consciousness of man, this again would be humanism. Man is capable of falling away from God into error without God's being affected. God exists entirely independent of man.

Harmony is the primary attribute Hirsch uses in his designation of God for in it he saw all of the others included. For him God is the harmony and the unity of the universe. This is not so limited a concept as saying that God is harmony within man. This could be interpreted in a humanistic manner, but not as a God upon whom everything is dependent, and in whom all things find support. The

concept of harmony when applied to God implies for Hirsch that he is the sole Creator and the Absolute Ruler in all creation. "Everything is guided by Him, follows Him, comes from Him, remains in Him, and returns to Him."<sup>13</sup> While God is entirely independent of man, man is never independent of God, His life is independent of us. Nevertheless God's life, the Divine life is attainable for man, if we are willing to take part in it. God's life is the true life for all mankind. Here, in a sense, Hirsch equates the Divine life with the good. "This is the conception of the good, the perfect, which contains its being in itself. Therefore we find the good, the perfect living within us, if we want to live in it."<sup>14</sup> Thus God and the Good remain completely independent of all mankind. However man has the duty of seeking for the divine in his own life. Man seeking the divine life does not imply anything metaphysical. Quite the contrary Hirsch insists that man only has to need to be human. The field of man's knowledge is limited to learning humanity and learning to recognize the divine in man. Man needs only to find God in man. Only a superhuman being would have the need of finding God in the superhuman. To know the divine in God is limited to God alone.

Most of the attributes of God other than those already discussed Hirsch connected with his concept of work.<sup>15</sup> God demands from each man at all times that he work according to his special qualifications and that he recognizes in that activity the purpose of his life. God's demands are always the same and always remain; therefore He is eternal. His omnipresence is manifest in the fact that His demands always accompany us. In every age and every place,

or as Hirsch describes it, "in every here and now," God's demand is upon us to participate in the divine life and to realize God's life in our own. God is omnipotent in that nothing can have power over the divine within us. The Divine is all powerful in all things. However the fact that God is omnipotent does not mean that He desires the unreasonable. This would be a defect in God who is all-perfect. God does not desire for instance, that the laws of the universe should be any different from what they are. The existence of temptation or evil, which many say could not exist with an omnipotent deity was explained partially above, <sup>in</sup> temptation being necessary to keep man alert from falling away from God. The power of evil is self-destructive, and therefore, as far as Hirsch is concerned, presents no problem. God could not be all-powerful without being all-knowing. If His knowledge were limited this would be a limitation of His power as well as His perfection. God's knowledge does not know time or place. The question immediately arises as to whether God knows the future. If the answer is in the affirmative that would imply that He knows that a particular individual at some time in the future will commit a specific sin. This would be a restriction of the liberty of the individual. Hirsch deals with this problem by concluding that God does not know beforehand because he does not want to know. He does not want to know because He does not want to limit human liberty. Besides there is no future for God. He lives in the eternal present. He transcends time, for He is all time.

That God created the world is implicit in all that has

been said before. Besides God, everything is created. God's creation of the world includes everlasting Divine maintenance. This excludes the Deistic "watch-maker" theory which compares God to a watchmaker who has made a watch, set it, and lets it run on by itself, the watchmaker being completely detached from the continued motion of the watch. The natural laws which the Deist claimed were part of the original creation are not forces, but Divine harmony is the force that sustains the world. The world is completely dependent upon God for its existence and continuance.

God's mercy is revealed in the potentiality for attaining the divine life which he has placed within each of us. Every new scientific discovery, all new knowledge, each step along the road of progress is a gift from God through His mercy. Divine mercy does not exist without divine justice. It is through history that God's justice is revealed to us. Hirsch feels that this is proven by the evil kings and evil kingdoms that have fallen. He cites the cases of Rome, Spain, and France among others. In this instance the criticism might well be leveled at Hirsch that he is reading in history what he wants to find. The scarcity of righteousness kings and righteous kingdoms makes it easy to say that kings and kingdoms have fallen because of divine justice. However this is a minor point in Hirsch's theology. The social, economic, and political interpretation of history was not generally accepted in Hirsch's day. His Deuteronomic view was much more prevalent, and it is to be expected that he should use it as an example of divine justice.

Divine mercy and love seem to be more important to Hirsch (with Kohler just the opposite is true). God does not need the individual for His own life, but because of love grants us the divine life. Thus God is like a father. God the Father educates us and offers us the means to grow better and richer in the true life. His love, like a father's, both chastens and educates. Man needs this education to avoid error and self-deception. God alone never errs. The Divine within man, in so far as it relates to good and evil, never errs unless man is willing to deceive him self. This error in spiritual life leads man away from divine harmony and into conflict. Yet always in life is the potentiality for harmony. Life itself has two aspects, the symbolic <sup>and</sup> the active or practical. The two together make up the truly human life, that is the Godlike life which is the real religious life for man. The symbolic serves to enable the individual and to lead to the active religious life. Worship is one aspect of the symbolic life. It is not for God, but for man. God is in no way dependent on man. He does not need our praise. This is our need. Through praising God we elevate and dignify ourselves. Through prayers of supplication we become aware of what our needs are and seek to learn through our experiences, to secure benefit from our sufferings. Communal worship is another symbol of life. It symbolizes our need for each other, our mutual dependency, and the necessity for cooperation. The people of Israel is itself a symbol of the ideals of Judaism just as Jesus is a symbol for those of Christianity.

The active life is a duty. It is a sacred obligation for

man to maintain and strengthen his work. Just as important as his own duties, <sup>s</sup>if the fulfillment of duties and devotion to vocation by his fellowman. Consequently he has a responsibility to aid his fellowman in every possible way so that he too can fulfill his sacred obligations. As each man's duty is equally important, so too is the life of your neighbor, as sacred as your own life. From this beginning, whole structure of social responsibility follows. Each man must work for the realization of the higher life. We are on the earth for creative activity. If we look within ourselves, we can find a standard of value for ourselves and for others. This standard is our own sense of human dignity, which is inherent in the idea of man being created in God's image. The recognition of this fact alone makes hatred of a brother impossible.

Thus, for Hirsch, the God concept is bound to life. He starts with man, his needs and his aspirations, and ends with man, but God always remains at the center. This is not a disinterested or a remote God, but <sup>one</sup> what who is constantly with man, upon whom man is always dependent. Ethics, moral duty, is directly dependent upon the God concept. Never for a minute does Hirsch become so involved in a metaphysical problem that he loses sight of his primary problem -- humanity. It is this religion of humanity which Hirsch finds to be the true nature of Judaism. Judaism is not a body of law, a nationalism, or a confession, but a set of religious truths which every child of God could evolve out of his own consciousness. These truths point



the way for self-realization to all mankind. In them is the key to living the divine life.

## Emil G. Hirsch

Emil G. Hirsch was not an outstanding philosopher, a leading theologian of Reform, or even an original thinker. However he is important because he was a leader of thought. In his ministry he achieved a tremendous following. His words, his ideas, and his principles were taken to heart by many. Hirsch was a radical in his religion, social, and economic thinking. He was accused by his opponents of being devoid of Judaism, of lacking honesty in his own convictions, and even of whittling away at Judaism. On the other hand a man of the integrity of Kaufmann Kohler recognized in Hirsch a man of principle.<sup>1</sup>

Unlike many of the earlier outstanding personalities in Reform, Emil G. Hirsch was born into Reform Judaism. His father was the philosopher of Reform, Samuel Hirsch. He was educated in Judaism and philosophy by his father. He came to America with his father at the age of fifteen, and received the finest type of American education at the Episcopal Academy in Philadelphia and then at the University of Pennsylvania. From there he went to Berlin to study the science of Judaism under Geiger at the Hochschule, and continued his secular studies at the Universities of Berlin and Leipzig. He returned to America with his Ph.D. to preach at Har Sinai in Baltimore for a year. Three years later, after an interim in Louisville and his marriage to the daughter of Dr. Einhorn, he received a call to Sinai congregation in Chicago. He did not have to be a pioneer there. Sinai already had a reputation for liberalism in thought and practice. Under his leadership the congregation experienced

rapid growth. Hirsch reached a large number of people through his Sunday morning lectures which were as well attended by gentiles as by Jews. Hirsch's stand on social justice was expounded from his pulpit and from the Reform Advocate, the weekly newspaper which he edited and wrote for. His activities in public life helped make him one of the outstanding personalities in Chicago. The opposition to him probably came as much from the fact that he was a self-sufficient power who frequently stood alone as from his radicalism, <sup>though</sup> ~~while~~ some of the antagonism probably resulted from his attitude towards ceremonials. Hirsch had little sympathy with the emotional elements of Judaism, with the mystic side of religion. He did not place much value upon ceremonial practices. It is easy to see how many could, from this fact alone, consider his attitude towards Judaism to be negative. However a careful reading of his writings will reveal a very positive attitude towards Judaism and the Jewish mission.

It is to be remembered that Emil G. Hirsch studied both philosophy and Judaism with his father. His father's thinking, and through him Feuerbach and Hegel, had a tremendous influence upon him. In fact, there is not a single important idea in the younger Hirsch which is not also to be found in the elder. Frequently the point of emphasis or the language is different, but the general interpretation of Judaism remains the same. Emil G. Hirsch adds little new to his father's "Religion of Humanity." His terminology is frequently sociological, he is always rational, and his great interest lay in the field of social justice. Con-

sequently it would be quite repetitious to go into great detail into his philosophy of Judaism and his idea of God. A summary of his major points of emphasis should suffice here.

Emil G. Hirsch follows his father in placing his primary religious emphasis on man, with God always implicitly at the center of his religious thinking. This is an outgrowth of Feuerbach's thinking which gave rise to the Humanitarian movement in the 1840's. According to Feuerbach, the religious ideal is the salvation and the elevation of man. Humanity should take the place of Divinity at the center of religious interest. Thus in a sermon entitled, "Doubts and Duties" Hirsch declared that "religion is the cultivation of the Divine in man; and is action, deed, in fulfillment of the creation (that is of the Divine purpose)."<sup>2</sup> While Christianity has the trinity at the center, Judaism, according to Hirsch, has Humanity at the center. As in the case of his father, it is possible to prove that Emil G. Hirsch is a humanist by quoting out of context. This is both unfair and untrue. Hirsch did write that "religion and Judaism are the quest for humanity; not the quest for God."<sup>3</sup> This is because of Hirsch's concern for man, and as a result of his recognition of the limitations of metaphysical speculations. Hirsch accepted Maimonides position that man cannot know God in Himself. Through the influence of modern philosophy, he recognized the weakness of the intellectual arguments for God's existence. Like his father he felt that the human heart is the first source of the knowledge of God.<sup>4</sup> Hirsch equated the human heart with the practical reason in the Kantian sense.<sup>5</sup> In his philosophy, he begins with man,

for from him arose cognition of God. Our conception of God arises within our imagination, and in this sense is a mirror of our own life. "If you tell me what kind of a God you reverse, I will tell you what kind of people you are."<sup>6</sup> It is the divine in its relation to man that is important -- the Divine <sup>IN</sup> ~~OF~~ man. For actually man cannot know God. As Hirsch understood it, Jewish theology is marked by the conviction that finite mind cannot grasp the contents of the infinite. God is "the thought too deep for the human mind to fathom, a word too full for the human tongue to utter. God, a silent suggestion of power beyond comprehension, of eternity beyond all grasp."<sup>7</sup> What then is the relation of this unutterable to man? God is the power not of ourselves that makes for righteousness. Hirsch held as a basic concept, as did his father, the idea that man is made in God's image. The basic goodness of man was fundamental to his thinking, this goodness being based on his being God-like. The atheist or humanist would doubt God, yet not doubt man. Hirsch argued that if you do not doubt man you cannot doubt God. This is a reflection of the fact that Hirsch's faith in man and his faith in God were bound up in each other. His interest in God was not metaphysical, but based on the needs of man and the hopes of man. Because he believed in man, he believed in God. He could not conceive of faith in man without faith in God.

Revelation was not acceptable as a source of knowledge about God to Hirsch, at least not in the conventional interpretation of revelation. Revelation for Hirsch was an act of reason. He accepted much the same evolutionary view of religion as did his father. Religion began with the lower form and not the higher.

The frame of reference for his thinking here is very obviously Darwinian. Revelation for him became a matter of development moving constantly upward. The facts themselves point up a course of development towards the highest. Because Judaism is evolutionary, there can be no unhistoric Judaism. Judaism always rests upon its past.<sup>8</sup> "Authority" and "revelation" are terms which Hirsch refused to accept for Judaism. He felt they are concepts that belong to dogmatic religion and that Judaism is far removed from dogmatism. While it was frequently argued that revelation was necessary as a source for higher truths which are beyond our reason, Hirsch reasoned that if truths are beyond our reason, we cannot grasp them, revealed or not; therefore, no revelation is necessary. Because of the developmental view of Judaism, higher criticism did not injure any of the tenets of the faith. Revelation is a continuous process through the spirit of Israel. Hirsch objected to the then current "back to the prophets" movement in Reform. Reform Judaism is not prophetic Judaism. The Bible and rabbinic writings are all part of a Judaism which is constantly moving forward. Judaism is not law, but it is growth.

The spread of the doctrine of evolution in no way was a threat to Hirsch's Judaism. As Hirsch understood it, it did destroy teleology in religion. Evolution rendered it impossible to look into the hidden plans of God at every new phenomenon. "No greater abuse was practiced than with the word "design"<sup>9</sup>. Rather than reading design into everything, Hirsch preferred to remember the Biblical dictum: "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways."<sup>10</sup> There is much positive that can be learned from evolution. Hirsch declared that it confirms



the truth of Judaism's insistent proclamation that God is one. Darwinism reads unity into the whole universe. A unity which has been further established since Hirsch's time by modern atomic physics. Creation by Divine fiat took on new meaning for Hirsch when read by the light of the modern doctrine. Atheism, he claimed, could derive no comfort from the then recent expositions of the theory of evolution, which actually reinforced the position of the theist.

Judaism has constantly laid emphasis upon the doctrine of the unity of God. Emphasis was laid not on the mere unity, but on the ethical quality of that unity. God's unity is for Judaism both the oneness of universal purpose running through creation and its essential righteousness. Judaism proclaims God the creator of all. This creation <sup>C</sup>ulminates in man, made in God's image. Following closely the thinking of his father, Hirsch reasons that God the creator made man in His own image; therefore, <sup>a</sup>man is a creator, a worker, a partner of God in the creation of the perfect world. God is one factor in the moral universe, and man is the other. In every heart, the sanctuary of God, God and man meet. It is in his development of the idea of God and man working as partners, an idea which is clearly stated in rabbinic sources and which predominates in Jewish tradition, that Hirsch proves himself to be a devoted Jew, interested in furthering Judaism and not in destroying it as his critics claimed. Hirsch was interested in giving each individual Jew a sense of purpose in being Jewish.

"Central to all Judaism," Hirsch wrote, "is that thought that man and God are at one, and that it is Israel's task to bring

to flower in life this unity of man and God ... It's (i.e. Israel's) consecration is none other than ethical, taking this word in its deepest sense which locates the ethical purpose in the center of all things and thus is bound to link man's ethical life and all this implies to a Law and a Will, a Power not ourselves, making for righteousness -- to God."<sup>11</sup> God created, but his creation was not a fait accompli. He is still creating and man is creating with Him. The task to lead in his ethical creativeness is covered by the phrase, "Mission of Israel." The sacramental word of Judaism is duty. It is the duty of the Jew, that is the Jewish mission, to proclaim the ideal of God and man to all mankind. This mission is the essence of Judaism, according to Hirsch. The world is not yet all beauty and human life is not yet perfection, but the potentialities are all there, implit in God's creation of man in His image. There is a potentiality for righteous living in each man as he comes to recognize the divinity which is in every human being. Every human soul shares to a certain degree in the essence of the divine. Israel is called to the duty of "illustrating in life the godliness of the truly human thru its own 'holiness' and the leading of men to the knowledge of the one, eternal, holy God."<sup>12</sup> This mission is incumbent upon every Jew by the mere fact of his having been born to Jewish parents. This ethical mission stands at the center of Hirsch's philosophy of Judaism. For him Ethics is the "mother of theology and cosmology." Religion, above all else, stands for love and is the attempt to make that love effective in the dealings of man with man, in the shaping of human society. Judaism stands out as the

religion in which God and man are regarded as at one, with no barrier of original sin separating them, so that they can be co-workers in the achievement of the great vision of establishing the Kingdom of God on earth.

There is certainly little that is original or new in this philosophy of Judaism. The idea of the Mission of Israel in its modern interpretation was central to the thinking of the early German reformers. The homiletical concept of "The Religion of Humanity" was developed by Dr. Samuel Hirsch, and merely taken over by his gifted son. But these ideas gained in power through the brilliant oratory of Emil G. Hirsch and through his fiery spirit. His too was a valuable contribution to the evolution and development of Progressive Judaism.

## Hyman G. Enelow

All of the men whose thinking we have analyzed up to now have been German born, and have received a part, if not all, of their formal education in Germany. Hyman G. Enelow is more representative of the majority of American Jews today. His background was Eastern European. He was born in Kovno in Lithuania, but his education was American. He was a graduate of the University of Cincinnati and the Hebrew Union College, and received his doctor<sup>al</sup> degree from the Hebrew Union College. His entire ministry was in this country. He served two congregations in Kentucky, and was rabbi of Temple Emanuel in New York from 1912 until his death in 1934. He took an active part in the two organizations of Reform Judaism, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and the Central Conference of American Rabbis, both of which were organized before his birth and were shaped before his ordination in 1898. As a scholar and as a writer, Dr. Enelow was highly regarded. He has left behind a legacy of many published works.

Enelow was a firm believer in the Reform interpretation of Judaism. In his mind, Reform Judaism was built upon three basic principles: (1) Judaism is a mobile and not a fixed form of religion; (2) its permanent and essential part is found in certain ethical and spiritual affirmations rather than in fixed ceremonial observations; and (3) by nature and destiny it is universal, and not national or local.

In his essay, "The Theoretical Foundations of Reform Judaism,"<sup>1</sup> Enelow lashes out against the critics of Reform Judaism who derogate it because it seeks to adapt its beliefs to the changing

social and political order. He points out that the entire story of the Jew is one of endless adjustments. He quotes the commentary of the "Book of the Pious" upon the Biblical verse "Moses commanded us a law, and inheritance for the congregation of Jacob" to mean that Moses commanded us to adapt such measures as would cause the Torah to remain a heritage. Human thought does not operate in a vacuum. It is correlated with circumstances. Who is able to distinguish in any group of human ideas just where the influence of the circumstances begins and ends? Who can tell in the long history of Judaism whether the principles which have sprung up at various times, such as "dina d'malchusa dina,"<sup>2</sup> are due to an influence of an environment or how much is due to the innate spirit of Judaism?

If the Orthodox view is accepted, the total mass of tradition is accepted as an integral part of the Jewish religious life and thought. This embraces both theory and practice. One must believe as well as act in conformity with the accumulated precepts of tradition. There is no such thing as engaging in free inquiry in Orthodoxy. Orthodoxy knows nothing of an historical expansion of the Law which has grown up in the course of time. Tradition to Orthodox Judaism is derived from God as well as from the written word; everything taught in the Talmud as "d'Oraysah"<sup>3</sup> has the same origin and value as the Bible. Rabbinical ordinances and customs are divine obligations from which one may not deviate.

Reform Judaism differs fully on this point. It does not believe in uniform, stationary, unalterable Judaism whether in theory or practice. The history of Judaism, it maintains, is full of

changes. It points to the various historic periods of Judaism which show its different developments, such as the Judaism of the pre-Ganaanitic times and the Judaism of the Palestinian era. Reform correlates the history of the Jewish people with the life of the Jewish people and takes cognizance of the fact that the beliefs and practices of the Jews have been constantly affected by the conditions under which they have lived. Reform looks upon Judaism as movement, not stagnation. And in this regard it is closely related to Pharisaism. It stands for the progressive use and adaptation of the contents of tradition. Thus there can be no absolute authority in tradition. Tradition is a continual stream, ever moving onward, not a congealed mass to which every attachment becomes a permanently encrusted element.

According to Enelow, the religious teachings of the Hebrew prophets are definitive and compulsory in Judaism as interpreted by Reform. Emil G. Hirsch had decried the "back to the prophets" movement in Reform. Hirsch claimed that Reform Judaism is no more prophetic Judaism than it is rabbinic Judaism. Both are part of a Judaism which is constantly developing and moving forward. But Enelow felt that the prophetic spirit is the deep vital force in Judaism; perennially as old as Judaism and yet an ever-creative principle working in every age to renew and revitalize Judaism. To Geiger, this was the dynamic tradition which intended to keep the letter of the Bible alive and it was the "creative energy that produced new forms and new institutions, that effected modifications of ideas in Judaism through the ages."



The prophetic belief in the Righteous God and righteous conduct as the indefeasible part of Judaism, the assertion that the spiritual and ethical affirmations of Judaism are its inevitable permanent elements and that all other things such as rites and ceremonies are relative matters. These Reform Judaism has adopted as the second principle in its theory. It does not reject ceremonies as such, but it emphasizes that ceremonies are merely symbols and not sacraments. Once again Enelow quotes Geiger: "The permanent in Israel is his belief in the one eternal God who rules over us in His almight and all goodness; trust in this holy and pure God; the conviction that He demands of us self-sanctification, that we honor Him by purifying ourselves, that our entire life must be borne by the thought of Him, that every act of ours must be hallowed by the goal to contribute to the fulfillment of the Divine Will; herein, Israel is always the same."<sup>4</sup>

Reform to Enelow was not arid rationalism but contained also the mystic element. He follows Loisy's definition of mysticism as "the presentiment of a spiritual Beyond given in the world and in man."<sup>5</sup> For Reform Judaism sees the goal of the Jewish Prophets in the spiritual.

Prophet in the Jewish sense, to Enelow, means Universalism. If the prophets are spoken of as politicians then they must be regarded as international politicians for their politics consisted in denouncing iniquity and sin both Jew and non-Jews, and in trying to convince men that God and Righteousness are universal and eternal, transcending national boundaries and temporal limits. They predicted

the establishment of a universal righteousness which would bring God's Kingdom on earth.

Reform, upon this ground, regards Judaism as a religion for the world, not merely for the Jew. It regards the Jew's destiny not to lie merely in the <sup>N</sup>ethical perfection of the Jewish people, but in the advancement of the religious enlightenment and moral perfection of the entire human race. The Jewish mission is thus twofold; perfection within the Jewish people in order that they might be a light to the nations of the world.

Enelow's concept of God is in terms of Jewish tradition and experience. The Jews were not the first to give a belief in God to the world. Belief in some sort of God seems to have existed as long as man has lived. But the Jews did contribute to the world a certain idea of God which was quite different from that of other peoples. This idea of God grew out of the historical experiences of the Jewish people in different ages and under different conditions. God is defined by Enelow as "the spirit whose energy produced the world with its infinite variety of activities, and by whose will is directed the eternal procession of life."<sup>6</sup> A more concrete definition of God in human language is impossible. Enelow<sup>Low</sup> declares that it is a part of Jewish tradition that God is far beyond description by mortal man. Maimonides stated that all the philosophers who are conscientious and careful in their pronouncements are in accord with the fact that no definition can be given to God. The rabbis tell us that the anthropomorphisms of God spoken of in the Bible are only for the sake of reaching our own understanding. They are merely a feeble attempt at finding some means of

speaking of God's within the limitations of human terms. The most one can actually describe of God are His divine qualities and the effect of His activity. It is through the mystic quality of the spirit that God makes His presence felt. The mystic requires no further description of God; to be conscious of his nearness is sufficient. This experiencing of God is no less real because He cannot be defined, and defies description. Rather it is within the individual, within and through the human personality with its basic capacities for thought and creative activity that the spirit works. It is this spirit which is the motivating force in life. Through this spirit the individual is motivated to follow God's will in his life.

It is impossible for the human mind to give an adequate description of the qualities or attributes of God. Description almost necessarily requires comparison, and in the words of Isaiah, "To whom will ye liken God or what likeness will ye compare unto Him?"<sup>7</sup> The Jewish philosophers, especially Maimonides, found it easier to speak of God in terms of negative attributes. All that we know is that God is not like any other being. In speaking and in thinking of Him, the positive must be accompanied by the negative. This thought is poetically stated in the "Yigdal."

The two qualities which Enelow associated, above all, with God were universality and holiness. He conceived of God as free from the limits of time and space. His universality has none of the divisions and conflicts found among man, and which at times human beings have attributed to the Deity. His unity and universality go hand in hand. Ezekiel and Deutero-Isaiah preached this larger vision of the nature of God. God is not bound to any one

place or any one time. His spirit permeates the entire universe, but not in the Spinozistic sense. Just as the spirit of man cannot be confined to some particular portion of his personality exclusive of any other part, so the spirit of God is not relegated to a particular part of the universe or a particular time in history.

Isaiah's interpretation of the holiness of God is of prime significance for Enelow. Holiness means that God is greater, more awe-inspiring, more august, than anything else in human experience. He is beyond the highest peak of human attainment. God's holiness also has moral implication. He is perfect in all of the moral virtues; in purity, justice, mercy, and truth. He is the essence of all moral perfection which is conceivable to man. God's character is in no way dependent upon the conduct of man, but He is righteousness in itself and made for righteousness in the world. In Judaism, the idea of God has always carried with it an idea of an ethical life. God is not an Absolute Being, or Static Being, of whom man can think without forming any sort of personal relation. On the contrary, in so far as man thinks of Him, He becomes part of his life, and his life and his conduct becomes part of God. "To know Thee, is perfect righteousness; yea, to know Thy dominion is the root of righteousness."<sup>8</sup> To think of God is to be with Him., to act with Him, to live and move in Him. The more godlike the individual becomes, the more fully he realizes his idea of God.

Further it follows, according to Enelow, that if God is morally perfect, He is a God of love. As in the vision of Moses, God is "loving and compassionate, long suffering and abundant in

lovingkindness and truth. Truth means justice, but there is no contradiction between justice and love. In fact they belong together for they are equally important to the perfection of man and the maintenance of the world.

Faith is the core of belief in God, despite the failure of proving it rationally. As to the question whether modern science can go hand in hand with such faith there is nothing in science which can replace or displace such faith. Science studies the laws of the universe. It tries to discover and to master them. But so far it has not been able to find, the secret of those laws are certainly not the secret of life. "It is God, the spiritual Being who made the world, and who lives and works within it in accord with unchangeable laws of which He is the source and of which the universe is the manifold expression."

Man is meant to be an expression of God. Man was created for the purpose of becoming God-like. And the only way he can become God-like is by acquiring the godlike qualities. Imitation Dei is the way man was intended to conduct his life. Man should try to imitate God's qualities of compassion, generosity, humility, and all of the ethical qualities which we associate with God.

Thus for Enelow, the concept of God is seen to be directly related to ethical living. It was shown earlier that the spiritual and ethical affirmations of Judaism imply a mission for the Jewish people. Thus while Enelow contributes nothing new to Jewish theology, he did serve as a powerful interpreter of the faith to the people. He preached a message of a living God who requires ethical living from the individual, and who has called

the Jewish people to spread this message to all peoples,  
this message of His universality and His holiness.



### Conclusion

Each of the men whose thinking we have examined, has in some important ways differed from many of the others. Their thinking covers a wide area. On one hand, Dr. Wise accepted the scriptures as binding, and on the other, Emil G. Hirsch regarded revelation as an act of reason. In between these two extremes was Dr. Einhorn, who accepted the spirit behind the scriptures as divine, but not the letter of the Law. Wise had a rather static conception of revelation and history. The others, from Einhorn through Enelow, felt the influence of Hegel, Geiger, and the modern school of historical thought, and regarded revelation as a continuous process of God revealing Himself in every age and every place. They conceived of Judaism as constantly changing to meet new conditions and accepting and adjusting to the truths that are revealed in each new age.

Isaac Mayer Wise, who was neither a philosopher or a scientist, sought in the Cosmic God to prove the existence of God. Samuel Hirsch, who was called the philosopher of the Reform movement, maintained that God could not be proven by philosophical means, that he could be found only in the heart of the believer. Believing, he required no proofs. For Einhorn, the theologian of the movement, the question of proofs does not arise. He deals almost exclusively with the principles of Reform and their practical application. The existence of God is a central belief in Judaism; without God, Judaism is unthinkable. Kohler only deals with the philosophical proofs in passing, for he asserts that God is a fact of man's inner experience, an adaptation of Kant and Schleiermacher transposed into his own system of Judaism.

Yet despite the difference in approach and in methodology as well as in the content of their thinking, everyone of these men adhered to one unchanging principle in their own philosophy of Judaism: the belief in the reality of God and in man's moral obligation. These men who shaped and lead American Reform Judaism from its earliest beginnings to the present age, could not conceive of Judaism other than as a God centered Faith. They conceived of God as the heart of Jewish living and thinking; as necessary for the living of an ethical life and a Jewish life. The common ground of all of them could well be summed up in the words of Dr. Kohler which were quoted earlier in this paper: "But one thing is clear, the core and center and purpose of Judaism is the doctrine of the One only holy God and of the upbuilding and spread of His Kingdom of truth, righteousness, and peace in the world, and the development and propagation of that doctrine is indissolubly linked with it as the historic mission of the Jewish people."

49. ibid, page 177
50. ibid, page 150
51. See page four this paper.
52. The American Israelite, Vol. 18, No. 2. July 14, 1871, page 8.
53. Wise, I.M. The Essense of Judaism, second edition, Bloch and Co., Cincinnati 1868, page 18.
54. Wise, I. M., Minhag America, 1868 Edition, page 33.
55. ibid, page 67 in the דברי חיים
56. ibid, page 102
57. ibid, pages 25, 27, 43, 99, and many other references.
58. ibid, page 44, and other instances
59. ibid, page 123f.
60. While a committee participated in the preparation of the prayer-book, Wise did the English translation himself. See Wise, I.M., Reminiscences, pages 343-345.
61. See page 2f of this paper.

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1. The pamphlet which was published in June, 1842, was entitled, "Darstellung des Sachverhältnisses in seiner hiesigen Rabbinatsangelegenheit."
2. Einhorn, David, translated by David Philipson and quoted in The Reform Movement in Judaism, MacMillan, New York, 1931, p. 69f.
3. *ibid*
4. *ibid*, page 122
5. In Kohler, *op.cit.*, page 10. Translated from a letter in the Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums, on the Frankfurt Society and its declarations.
6. *ibid*, page 13
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8. "Inaugural Sermon at Har Sinai Temple in Baltimore," translated by C.A. Rubenstein, published by Har Sinai in a souvenir pamphlet on the centenary of Einhorn's birth, 1909.
9. Einhorn, David, The Asmonean, Jewish Weekly, edited and published in New York by Robert Lyon, July 17, 1857.
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14. *ibid*
15. in Philipson, *op.cit.*, page 353
16. The Jewish Times, June 30, 1871
17. The signers included in addition to Einhorn, S. Adler, N.Y.; L. Adler, Chicago; S. Deutsch, Baltimore; B. Felsenthal, Chicago; J. K. Gutheim, New York; H. Hochheimer, Baltimore; K. Kohler, Detroit; M. Landsberg, Rochester; L. Mayer, Pittsburgh; M. Meilziner, New York; M. Schlesinger, New York; and B. Szold, Baltimore.

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4. Neumark, quoted in "Kaufmann Kohler" by H.G. Enelow, in a pamphlet reprint from the American Jewish Yearbook.
5. Kohler, K., "Judaism," Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. VII, p. 359.
6. Yearbook of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1898, page 87.
7. Kohler, K., "Backwards or Forwards," a Series of sermons on Reform Judaism published by Congregation Beth El, New York, 1885, page 23.
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13. Kohler, K., Jewish Theology, MacMillan, New York, 1928, page 53.
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16. *ibid*, page 30
17. *ibid*
18. *ibid*, page 70
19. *ibid*, page 34
20. *ibid*, page 38
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24. ibid, page 159
25. Jewish Theology, page 72
26. ibid, page 73
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29. Jewish Theology, page 79
30. J.E. op.cit., page 359
31. Jewish Theology, page 91.
32. ibid, page 95
33. ibid, page 98.
34. ibid, page 101
35. Leviticus 19.1
36. Studies, Addresses, etc., "Three Discourses on Jewish Ethics" page 238
37. Jewish Theology, page 106
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39. ibid, page 120f
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