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JOSEPH B. SOLOVEITCHIK: THE LONELY ZIONIST

A Translation of and Introduction to His Speech

"Joseph Dreamed a Dream and Told it to His Brothers"

Margaret Moers Wenig

Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of
Requirements for Ordination

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Referee: Professor Eugene B. Borowitz

For Molly E. Lane

who exemplified

"If you search there for the Lord your God
you will find Him, if only you seek Him
with all your heart and with all your soul
... even if it costs you your life."

CONTENTS

Preface	iv
Introduction	
Soloveitchik the Preacher	1
Structure and Significance	4
Legends of Brisk	7
Soloveitchik as Symbol	11
Soloveitchik the Lonely Zionist	12
Notes	15
Translation:	
"Joseph Dreamed a Dream and Told It to His Brothers"	
The God of the Land	23
A Purchased Field and a Possession of a Burial Place ...	27
Everyone Is Building Altars	31
Four Altars	35
Joseph and His Brothers	38
My Affiliation with the Mizrachi	50
Who Bore These for Me?	54
You Stay Here with the Ass	64
The Value of Our Work	70
There Are Two Paths before Me	72
Notes	78
Appendix A: The Soloveitchik Family Tree	85
Appendix B: List of Biblical and Rabbinic Sources	86
Appendix C: List of Historical Events, Names and Places..	87
Appendix D: Sample from <u>Halakhic Man</u>	88
Appendix E: Sample from <u>On Repentance</u>	90
Bibliography	91

Preface

"Joseph Dreamed a Dream and Told It to His Brothers" is a pivotal essay for any biography or intellectual history of Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik. For in this essay the Rav, as he is affectionately and reverently called, explains his shift from opposition to support of Zionism. Yet Soloveitchik's Zionism is not a popular form of Zionism but an extension of his own uncommon vision.

In its original language, Yiddish -- even in its translation into modern Hebrew -- its audience remains limited to "ins ders." By translating "Joseph" into English, I seek to make it available to a wider audience. Those outside the Orthodox camp may be able to appreciate, even more than those within it, the intellectual and personal courage Soloveitchik exhibits in squarely facing the realities of modern secular culture and monumental historical transformations while remaining faithful to Torah and tradition. Soloveitchik abhors the simple, comforting answer. He exposes, instead, the complex, dialectical nature of the problem and offers not resolution but a model of painful struggle. From the perspective of the 1980s, a time of religious and social conservatism in America, when the pressures to conform are heavy, Soloveitchik's

willingness to stand alone impresses me as extraordinary.

"Joseph Dreamed a Dream and Told It to His Brothers" was originally a speech delivered by Soloveitchik at a convention of the Mizrachi Ha-Po'el Ha-Mizrachi in the United States in the 1960s. The speech first appeared in print in Yiddish in the volume Fir Droshe (Machon Tal Orot, World Zionist Organization, 1966).

The preface to the Yiddish volume does not specify the year this speech was given. The text itself, however, offers three clues to its date: 1. The existence of the State of Israel is treated as an established fact. Thus the speech must be dated well after 1948. Fifteen thousand dollars is considered a typical starting salary for someone with a graduate degree. Thus the speech postdates the 1950s. 3. Finally, the question "Who is a Jew?" is mentioned. Thus the speech must postdate 1958, when that question first became the subject of heated controversy in the Israeli government.

The Yiddish was translated into Hebrew by David Telsner in the collection Hamesh Drashot (Jerusalem, Machon Tal Orot, World Zionist Organization, 1974). Though many articles attributed to Rabbi Soloveitchik are reconstructions of his public lectures rather than the Rav's own words, that is not the case here. When Telsner writes in his preface, "I hope

that my translation will not obscure the polished and idiomatic literary style of the original," he implies that the Yiddish original represents the ipsissima verba of the Rav.

My purpose was to render faithfully the sense and flavor of the Hebrew into idiomatic English. This is not, therefore, a word-for-word translation. For translations of Biblical verses the most recent translations of the Torah and Prophets issued by the Jewish Publication Society of America (1962, 1978) were consulted but not slavishly followed. The Soncino translation of the Talmud was similarly utilized. I departed from the standard translations when the context of the speech required a different interpretation.

I have provided the sources for Biblical citations, which the author omitted entirely, as well as for rabbinic citations, whose sources occasionally were left unspecified. These additions appear in square brackets.

I have not explicated halakhic terms when they appear in long lists and contribute only to the flavor, but not to the argument, of the speech. I have, however, provided extensive notes on all of the historical events, names, and places (except for the most obvious) for the benefit of the reader unfamiliar with the history of the Yishuv or with the

leaders of modern Orthodoxy. All of these are quoted directly from the Encyclopedia Judaica.

The system of transliteration follows the "General" system employed by the Encyclopedia Judaica. Unlike that system, however, ז appears here as "tz" and ח as "h" or "ch". If a Hebrew word or proper noun has a conventional transliteration, the convention has been followed.

I could not have executed this project without the help of the following people to whom I owe thanks. My parents, Jerome and Mary Moers Wenig, tolerated in good humor two months' disruption, by weekend invasions, of their offices and especially their computer. Dr. Michael Chernick explained many of the elliptical halakhic terms to me. Dr. Stanley Nash patiently worked with me as I struggled through pages of Ish ha-Halakha, and in a quiet and modest way called on his broad knowledge of Hebrew literature and Western philosophy. He also helped me with the most difficult sentences of this piece and caught many of the Biblical allusions. David Singer gave me his time, generously shared his research for his own (yet unpublished) book on Soloveitchik, and provided me with bibliographic information and personal insights. His ideas, even where I depart from them, form the kernel of my thesis. Special thanks are due to Dr. Eugene Borowitz, my thesis advisor,

whose keen intellect, awesome memory, and uncanny ability to perceive, in an instant, the essence of an issue, continually inspire and challenge me. He guided this endeavor with a steady hand and an understanding heart. Above all I am grateful to my husband, Robert J. Rubenstein, M.D., who has supported me materially and emotionally throughout my training for the rabbinate. Bob is a meticulous editor, passionate word processor, loving companion, "compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in kindness and faithfulness."

Introduction

Soloveitchik the Preacher

As we would expect of someone delivering a speech at a political convention, in this speech Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik¹ praises the Mizrachi for its accomplishments, articulates a very general political platform, defends the Mizrachi against its opponents (though he never mentions them by name), urges the promotion of the Mizrachi in America, and calls upon those assembled to rally to the cause of the Mizrachi.²

To the extent that this speech is a political speech, Soloveitchik tells his audience what they expect and want to hear. However, this speech is not in its essence a political speech. For Soloveitchik has set every political event and platform, including and especially the efforts of the Mizrachi, into a religious context. Soloveitchik's religious dialectic does not permit him to give a one-sided political speech: just as confidently as he proclaims the correctness of the Mizrachi's position, so humbly does he admit the possibility of error, at the end of the speech, when he calls upon the Mizrachi to confess and repent.

In essence, then, the speech is not a typical political

speech but a sermon, a sermon of a very high quality. With the exception of a thirteen-page discursus in the middle, the sermon is an extended homily on the construction of four altars by the Biblical Abraham. That Soloveitchik has sustained an interpretation of this story over thirty-seven pages is an exegetical feat. The interpretation has integrity and credibility because it is comprehensive, treating all of the altars built by Abraham, encompassing the contexts as well as the details of each event.

Though Soloveitchik makes liberal use of rabbinic sources (see Appendix B) they are tangential to his exegesis. With the exception of two details which he borrows from Rashi and Ramban, he reads the biblical text unmediated by the classical commentators. Everyone in the audience knows well the story of Abraham. And everyone in the audience knows well the outline Soloveitchik draws of the history and accomplishments of the Mizrachi. Soloveitchik's hiddush (novel interpretation) is the connection he has made between the two. He has interpreted the history and current political stance of the Mizrachi in religious terms using biblical images, thereby adding authenticity and religious authority to his political message.³

The form of the speech is eminently accessible to the audience. The style is deliberate on his part. For Soloveitchik has a broad range of literary styles in his repertoire. In his philosophical work, Halakhic Man, most sentences are so complex they must be deciphered, and references to Western philosophers so replete that only the initiate can follow his thinking. In his annual Mishneh Torah shiurim for Orthodox rabbis he speaks like a sugya of Gemara, weaving intricate lines of argument which require a chart or a mathematical mind to follow. (See the examples provided in Appendices D and E.) In contrast, halakhic argumentation and philosophical language are entirely absent from this speech. This speech is clear and orderly. His thinking follows a single line with only one digression. His sentences are short and simple, at times consisting of only a word or phrase. His use of repetition and rhetorical questions ensures that the speech is easily grasped aurally. On a single hearing, the speech can not only be understood but remembered as well. (Israel Friedman recalled its content though he heard it over twenty years ago.) Soloveitchik exploits concrete imagery even to the extent of personifying inanimate objects ("the treacherous Arab bullet"); he is passionate, dramatic (sometimes bordering on the melodramatic), and humorous ("How do we acquire the Holy

One, blessed be He? By lifting up? God forbid!"); he invokes experiences he has shared with the audience ("We all studied Nezikin"); he involves the audience on a personal and emotional level, referring to things sure to resound in his listeners' hearts (the relationship between father and son, the feeling of being alone in a crowd, the pain of leaving home); and he exposes part of himself to them.

Structure and Significance

It is fairly simple to outline Soloveitchik's thinking in this piece. An outline not only summarizes the piece and directs our attention to its main point but it also reveals a deviation from its tight form. In the break from the established pattern lies the real message.

	SUBTITLE	LENGTH	MASHAL (STORY)	NIMSHAL (REALITY)
1	The God of the Land	4pgs.		To acquire the Land of Israel you must acquire the God of Israel; this is accomplished through suffering /sacrifice.
2	A Purchased Field and a Possession of a Burial Place	4pgs.	Abraham temporarily acquired Machpelah by purchasing it with silver; he permanently acquired it by digging a grave	
3	Everyone is Building Altars	4pgs.	Abraham buried his wife...	Religious as well as secular Zionists have died for the Land and have thus permanently acquired the Land.
4	Four Altars	2pgs.	Abraham built 4 altars: 1. Go Forth, 2. Near Ai, 3. "Walk about the Land", 4. Akedah	As above, the religious and secular have built altar #3, but only the religious have built the remaining 3.
		1pg.	#1 Abraham left his home and family	We have sacrificed on the altar of loneliness
5	Joseph and His Brothers	10pgs.	Joseph of the Humash had a vision of the future in which the descendants of Abraham would be strangers and ostracized in a strange land; he was ostracized by his brothers who said, "Why must you tend God's sheep?" God ruled according to Joseph	The Joseph of 1902 foresaw the end of the Eastern European communities, urged adaptation; he was ostracized God ruled according to Joseph
6	My Affiliation With the Mizrahi	3pgs.		My family opposed Zionism and said to me, "Why must you tend God's flock?" Nonetheless I joined the Mizrahi because God ruled according to Joseph.
7	Who Bore These For Me?	7pgs.	#2 Abraham built the second altar so that his sons not fall in Ai through Achan's transgression (Achan succumbed to the temptation of the spoils of Jericho)	Mizrahi built yeshivas to educate its children. The yeshivas succeeded despite the spoils of material wealth tempting young men.
8	You Stay Here With the Ass	5pgs.	#3(4) Abraham left his two trusty servants at the bottom of Mt. Moriah though he had invited them to accompany him thus far.	The Mizrahi collaborates with secular Zionists up to a point. Beyond that point it alone protects the sanctity of the State.
9	The Value of Our Work	2½pgs.	You stay here with the ass.	We are criticized for limiting our collaboration with the secular. The fate of Judaism rests on us.
10	There are Two Paths Before Me	4½pgs.	(Yohanan ben Zakkai chose the Oral Law over Jerusalem; he was never certain he made the correct choice. At the end of his life he confessed.) You stay here with the ass.	We cannot be certain we have chosen correctly. We must confess. May God forgive us if we have erred by limiting our collaboration with the secular.

The speech is an extended homily on the building of four altars by Abraham (and by the Mizrahi). Section 1 establishes the premise. Section 2 provides the mashal for 1. The story of Abraham begun in 2 is continued in 3, 4, 7, and 8. The third altar of section 8 is also the

mashal for the triumphant conclusion in 9 and the humble postscript in 10. Sections 5 and 6, however, nearly a third of the speech's length, form a self-contained unit completely independent of the Abraham story. These two sections are based on a different mashal, that of Joseph and his brothers, which is mentioned nowhere else in the speech. By breaking the smooth flow of the Abraham story this section calls attention to itself. The significance of this section is acknowledged by whomever titled the speech "Joseph Dreamed a Dream and Told It to His Brothers," rather than "Abraham Built Four Altars."

What then does this analysis of structure tell us about the message of the speech? On the surface the speech deals with the extent and limits of the Mizrachi's relationship with non-observant Jews. This is the subject of sections 3, 4, 8, 9, and 10. Soloveitchik argues that the entire Zionist movement, secular as well as religious, has a claim to the Land, though the claim of the religious is stronger. Secular Jews are God's agents in the work of rebuilding the Land and without them the religious could not accomplish that goal. Therefore the Mizrachi follows a policy of limited cooperation (coalition). However when matters of religion are concerned, the Mizrachi alone defends the sanctity of the land and the state.

The message which lies only slightly below the surface has nothing to do with relations with secular Jews. On the contrary, it concerns the far right-wing Jews who oppose Zionism altogether. This is Soloveitchik's personal message. This is his apologia. He not only defends the Mizrachi against its right-wing (Agudah) detractors but he defends himself for changing parties and he casts his defense in their terms. Against whom is he defending himself? Why is his defense so urgent?

In the speech Soloveitchik says, "I was not born in a Zionist household; my grandparents, my immediate family, my teachers, and my companions were far from the Mizrachi." In this statement he conceals more than he reveals. What in fact was his family's attitude toward Zionism?

Legends of Brisk

Does Soloveitchik's affiliation with the Mizrachi constitute a complete break with the traditional Brisker

attitude toward Zionism? There is little discussion of this question in print. Privately, there are two schools of thought. The first, represented by Norman Frimer,⁴ answers: No! Within the Volozhin and Brisk circles there were two attitudes toward Zionism: one favorable, the other not. Reb Hayyim of Brisk, for all his love of Zion, was in outspoken opposition to political Zionism. On the other hand, the Netziv (Rabbi Naphtali Tzevi Judah Berlin), head of the Volozhin yeshiva, where Reb Hayyim taught for years, was a member of Hibbat Zion and his son, Rabbi Meir Bar Ilan, Soloveitchik's "uncle,"⁵ was the founder of Mizrachi in the United States. Furthermore, Soloveitchik's father, Moses, was Rosh Yeshiva at the Rabbi Elchanan Rabbinical Seminary of Yeshiva University (an institution closely linked to Mizrachi) from 1929 until his death. This school of thought speculates that even in Europe, Soloveitchik may have leaned toward the pro-Zionist side of his family.

The second school of thought, represented by David Singer,⁶ answers: Yes! Soloveitchik affiliated with the Mizrachi in opposition to an unequivocal and virulently anti-Zionist family tradition. Not only was Reb Hayyim in his time opposed to political Zionism,⁷ but his son and successor, Isaac Zeev⁸ (and his son Joseph Dov, of

Jerusalem, the current scion of the Brisker tradition), opposed Zionism though they made Jerusalem their home from 1941 on. Isaac Zeev was a separatist, a member of the Edah ha-Haredit (literally "the Orthodox Community") of Agudat Israel, today more or less identical with the Neturei Karta, who do not recognize the State of Israel.⁹ He looked with disdain upon Soloveitchik's affiliation with the Mizrachi. As for the family's alleged Zionist sympathies, this school points out that though the Netziv was a Hovev Zion he was opposed to political forms of Zionism as well as to the introduction of Western subjects into the curriculum of his yeshiva. Bar Ilan, the active political Zionist, was "nobody" as far as the family was concerned and was not likely to have attracted Soloveitchik to his cause.

This school of thought believes Soloveitchik's political affiliations to be a function of parnosseh, the need to earn a living, and offers the following scenario: After earning his Ph.D. in Berlin in 1931, Soloveitchik took a boat to Palestine where he applied for the position of chief rabbi of Tel Aviv. He had a conflict with Rav Goren and was not offered the job. He immigrated to the United States and never once returned to Eretz Israel.¹⁰

In the United States, it is charged, Soloveitchik was

like a chameleon, changing his political colors to suit his environment. Legend has it that upon his arrival in the United States Soloveitchik was advised by Bernard Revel to shave his beard. Soloveitchik accepted Revel's advice only to find upon his arrival in Boston that the Boston rabbis were appalled to see his face clean-shaven. He grew another beard.

In Boston, where Soloveitchik initially earned his livelihood supervising ritual slaughtering, his authority depended upon the backing of Rabbi Eliezer Silver, a powerful figure in the Union of Orthodox Rabbis. To secure Silver's support, Soloveitchik joined Silver's party, the Agudat Israel.¹¹ In 1940 Soloveitchik even addressed a convention of the Agudah where he delivered a eulogy for the Agudah leader Rabbi Hayyim Ozer.¹²

Because of Soloveitchik's far right-wing affiliation, his appointment to Yeshiva University in 1941 was heralded with letters of protest in the student newspaper. Soloveitchik soon shed his Agudah skin and joined the Mizrachi, becoming its honorary president in 1946, a position he still holds.

Soloveitchik as Symbol

The two schools of thought represented by Frimer and Singer both view Soloveitchik "from a distance." Both are concerned with Soloveitchik the public figure. (I venture to guess that to most Modern Orthodox, who Soloveitchik is and what he represents are more important than what he writes or says.) An explanation for the adulation which surrounds Soloveitchik "is his importance as a symbolic figure within the American Orthodox community. For virtually all modern Orthodox Jews, i.e., those who seek to combine a commitment to traditional Jewish law with an openness to modern secular culture and society, Soloveitchik, or more precisely Dr. Soloveitchik, is the one recognized religious authority who can validate their way of life."¹³

Frimer interprets Soloveitchik's Zionism as a natural outgrowth of a minor family tradition; Singer views it as a concession to his employers. One puts the Zionist

Soloveitchik on a pedestal; the other looks for his clay feet. Why does Singer try to debunk the myths surrounding the Rav? Singer considers himself an "Orthodox modernist"¹⁴ (notice the emphasis). Perhaps his aim is to expose the emperor of modern Orthodoxy in order to clear the way for open critical debate on crucial matters such as the evolution of the halakha.

Soloveitchik the Lonely Zionist

Soloveitchik's Zionism is neither a natural outgrowth of his family's love of Zion (he admits this himself) nor a calculating move to fit into the Yeshiva University milieu (this theory ignores Soloveitchik's own account of his affiliation), nor even, as Eliezer Schweid would have it, a creative synthesis of the dialectical tension between Judaism and secular culture.¹⁵ Soloveitchik does not consider himself a sturdy bridge between modernity and Orthodoxy. On the contrary, he is the troubled waters, in constant turmoil between the two worlds. Those who take

comfort in his example are missing the point. His example is one of never-ending struggle. Soloveitchik's Zionism is fraught with anguish and loneliness.

He is not lonely from a lack of fellow Mizrachi members but from the "loss of the tie he had with the world in which he grew up," and because of his vision, which is uniquely his own. His loneliness is both an historical/social phenomenon and an ontological one. It is the "metaphysical destiny of the man of faith," a "destiny from which he can never be completely liberated," compounded by the "peculiar position in our secular society" of the contemporary man of faith.¹⁶

Modern man does not seek [God] and does not wish to know Him ... even the so-called religious man [is a stranger] to [the] search for God.... In general it is possible to describe the relationship of the man of our times to the Creator of the world as despairing and skeptical. (From "Joseph Dreamed a Dream")

Like Abraham, who made the great sacrifice of "Go forth!," and Joseph, who gave up family and friends, Soloveitchik's loneliness is also an offering. He sacrifices "on the altar...peace of mind and...friendships." "The very experience of loneliness presses everything in me into the service of God."¹⁷

Eretz Israel is neither a physical nor spiritual

homeland for Soloveitchik as it is for other Zionists. Soloveitchik is "a golus Jew," as Singer has called him;¹⁸ a Jew in exile, unredeemed -- not because he makes his home in the United States, but because he is a man of faith.

The dialectical role has been assigned to man by God.... God...wants the man of faith to oscillate between the faith community and the community of majesty, between being confronted by God in the cosmos and the intimate, immediate apprehension of God through the covenant. [He] willed that complete human redemption be unattainable.... Man does not feel at home in any community. He is commanded to move on before he manages to strike roots in either of these communities, and so the ontological loneliness of the man of faith persists. Verily "A straying Aramean was my father."¹⁹

Soloveitchik has not made peace with Zionism nor embraced a hyphenated "religious-Zionism." Like Yohanan ben Zakkai, Soloveitchik believes that the survival of the nation depends upon the Oral Law, not upon Jerusalem or the Temple. "The Land of Israel is holy because...the future of the Torah is tied to it;" Zionism is a way to secure that future. As Soloveitchik allegedly said, "Torah is my homeland."²⁰

1. "Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik [was born in Pruzhan, Poland, on February 27, 1903, an heir to] an illustrious rabbinic dynasty which played a crucial role in promoting the 'Litvak' or 'Mitnagged' outlook of Lithuanian Jewry. He was [taught his grandfather's famous method of Talmud study (the Brisk method)] by his father who was his one and only teacher until his teens. When the...family took up residence in Warsaw in 1920, Joseph began to engage in secular pursuits; he studied with a series of tutors until he attained the equivalent of a gymnasium education. In 1925, Soloveitchik enrolled as a philosophy student at the University of Berlin, specializing in logic, metaphysics, and epistemology. Soloveitchik remained at Berlin for six years, capping his academic work with a doctoral dissertation on the neo-Kantian philosopher Hermann Cohen.

"In 1932 Soloveitchik emigrated to the United States, becoming 'chief rabbi' of the small Orthodox community in Boston.... [He succeeded] his father as the senior talmudist at Yeshiva University in 1941" (David Singer and Moshe Sokol, "Joseph Soloveitchik: The Lonely Man of Faith," pp. 230-231).

2. "Mizrachi (term coined from some of the letters of the Hebrew words merkaz ruchani, spiritual center), [is the] religious Zionist movement whose aim was expressed in its motto: "The Land of Israel for the people of Israel according to the Torah of Israel" (coined by Rabbi Meir Berlin -- Bar-Ilan). Mizrachi was founded in 1902 as a religious faction in the World Zionist Organization. The name was first used by Samuel Mohilewer, an early leader of Hibbat Zion, to express the idea that the Torah should be the spiritual center for Zionism....

"...The movement's program was summed up at the [1904] conference as follows: (1) Mizrachi is an organization of Zionists who follow the Basle Program and desire to work for the perpetuation of Jewish national life. Mizrachi sees the perpetuation of the Jewish people in the observance of the Torah, Jewish tradition, and the mitzvot and the return to the land of its forefathers. (2) Mizrachi will remain within the framework of the Zionist Organization, in which it will struggle for its opinions and views. However, it will create a special organization of its own for its religious and cultural activities. (3) The purpose of Mizrachi is to realize its goals by employing all the legal means at its disposal to explain

its ideas to all Orthodox circles, by creating and distributing national-religious literature, and by educating youth in the spirit of its ideals and programs....

"As early as its first conference in Eretz Israel [in 1918], Mizrachi raised the matter of establishing the offices of the rabbinate as one of the major points on the agenda....

"With the end of World War I and the publication of the Balfour Declaration, the Third Aliyah began to arrive in Palestine and brought with it members of Tze'irei Mizrachi, who strove to build up the land on the basis of pioneering labor and religious renewal.... Their vision was expressed in the short motto "Torah va-Avodah", which became the basis for the religious labor movement and the establishment of Ha-Po'el ha-Mizrachi in Eretz Israel....

"[In 1955] Mizrachi and Ha-Po'el ha-Mizrachi united throughout the world[. A] common conference of the two organizations in Israel was held in the summer of 1956 and [they] decided to found a united party by the name of the National Religious Party (Miflagah Datit Le'ummit, abbreviated to Mafdal)....

"...Its efforts also led to the passage of the laws governing kashrut and Sabbath observance in the Israel Defense Forces, marriage and divorce, rabbinical judges, etc....

"...Mizrachi of America was founded in 1911 with groups in New York and St. Louis. Rabbi D. B. Abramowitz was the first president. The organization did not become effective until 1913, when Rabbi Meir Berlin settled in New York and became the leader of the movement" (Encyclopedia Judaica, s.v. "Mizrachi").

3. History rarely plays a role in the writings of Rabbi Soloveitchik. His thinking is rooted in the halakha and in his own existential churnings, both of which transcend specific historical events, time, and place.

Yet in "Joseph Dreamed a Dream" history plays a leading role. Not only are specific historical events, dates, names and places mentioned and alluded to with frequency (see Appendix C), but history (as the manifestation of Divine will) is accorded the role of ultimate judge.

As opposed to the secular Jew who "is determined to

explain the drama of Jewish history in superficial rationalistic categories," Soloveitchik interprets historical events in religious terms: the establishment of the State is a "miracle of God," "Providence ruled according to Joseph and against his brothers and She is using secular Jews as agents to implement the great plan regarding the Holy Land of Israel." It was God's will that Ishmael and Eliezer accompany Abraham to Mount Moriah; this "is the Lord's will now as well." "On historical questions the Holy One, blessed be He, himself adjudicates the halakha." "History [personified] has transformed the impoverished, the humble pioneer who ploughs and sows, into one who spreads Torah and builds great yeshivas." "History" has even overruled Soloveitchik's own grandfather Reb Hayyim.

Not only is God's will expressed through historical events, but human action has spiritual import: leaving home, building yeshivas, and collaborating on a limited basis with secular Jews are all acts of spiritual sacrifice on the part of the Mizrachi. Even the nonbeliever acquires the God of the Land by farming the land and by dying in its defense.

4. In two telephone calls in February, 1984. Primer is the retired director of the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture. For genealogical information, Primer consulted Men of the Spirit by Leo Yung.

5. In Halakhic Man Soloveitchik refers to Bar Ilan as his "uncle". Their actual relationship is unclear to me because I have not been able to determine which of the Netziv's three wives was the mother of Bar Ilan. I can say with certainty, however, that Soloveitchik's father was the great grandson of the Netziv making Bar Ilan Soloveitchik's great grand-uncle. (See Appendix A.) Perhaps Bar Ilan's mother was a Soloveitchik or Bar Ilan himself married a Soloveitchik.

6. Singer is editor of the American Jewish Year Book and co-author of "Joseph Soloveitchik: Lonely Man of Faith" (with Moshe Sokol, Modern Judaism 2[1982]:227-272). The information which follows was generously given me in two telephone conversations in February 1984. Singer's analysis as I have presented it has never appeared in print and will, apparently, be included in his book on Soloveitchik to be published by the New York University Press.

7. Reb Hayyim wrote, "I am afraid to say that I just do

not know how I might best set at [the Zionists who have come together so strongly now]. For each and every one of them is of an evil reputation in his own locality.... And their purpose, as they have already announced and published it, is the uprooting of the foundations of the religion and, to that end, the conquest of all the communities of Israel.... Unbelievably, even after the revelation of their evil intent, there are still some among the righteous who continue to be associated with them" (from a letter to Rabbi Yaacov Moshe Karpas, 25 August 1899 Central Zionist Archives A:9/154/13, quoted by David Vital in Zionism: The Formative Years, pp.211-213).

"Reb Hayyim was a member of Agudat Israel and at the Kattowitz conference of 1812 he presented the conditions for the participation of Polish and Lithuanian rabbis in the movement." (Encyclopedia Judaica s.v. "Agudat Israel")

8. In choosing his successor, Reb Hayyim passed over his eldest son, Moshe, whom he considered to be less brilliant than the younger Isaac Zeev. Moses was apparently very bitter. Today when a man says he is learning "in Brisk" he means in the Jerusalem yeshiva founded and administered by Isaac Zeev's eldest son, Joseph Dov, not at Yeshiva University with our Joseph Dov.

9. The Edah ha-Haredit grew in the second decade of this century initially out of opposition to the inauguration of the chief rabbinate. "Some of the rabbis of Jerusalem, led by Rabbi Yitzhak Yeruham Diskin and Rabbi Yosef Hayyim Sonnenfeld, regarded the newly inaugurated [chief] rabbinate as a Zionist institution and a disaster for religious Jewry. They went so far as to designate the anniversary of its founding a day of fasting and prayer. They therefore organized their own Ashkenazi council, which later became the Edah ha-Haredit." (Encyclopedia Judaica, s.v. "Israel, State of [Religious Life]")

David Singer identified Isaac Zeev as a member of the Edah. Interestingly, the Encyclopedia Judaica doesn't mention his or Reb Hayyim's opposition to Zionism. The Encyclopedia Judaica article on Isaac Zeev concludes, "R. Velvel loved the Holy Land and believed wholeheartedly in the mitzvah of living there."

10. Singer called my attention to a brief passage in the section "Beseter Uvegilui" (In Aloneness, In Togetherness, p.334), a eulogy for Rabbi Zeev Gold (a Mizrahi leader), in which Soloveitchik recalls an evening walk he took in

Ramat Gan in 5695 (1934/35) with Rav Gold. The date is at variance with Singer's chronology.

Aaron Lichtenstein in his brief biographical sketch (in Noveck, ed., Great Jewish Thinkers of the Twentieth Century, p.281-297) and the article in the Encyclopedia Judaica both report that in 1959 Soloveitchik declined to be a candidate to succeed Rabbi Isaac Herzog as Ashkenazi chief rabbi of Israel, but neither source mentions the incident in Palestine nor the allegation that Soloveitchik has never since set foot in the State.

11. Singer's source for this is Aaron Rothkoff's book on Eliezer Silver, in the chapter on the Kashrut Controversy, in which Soloveitchik is mentioned by implication, and in the chapter on the Agudah, in which Soloveitchik is mentioned by name. Neither the Encyclopedia Judaica nor Lichtenstein mention Soloveitchik's Agudah connection.

Decisive evidence of Soloveitchik's Agudah affiliation is found in the journal Ha-Pardes, September 1940, p. 28:

הגאון ד' יוסף דוב הלוי סלוביצקי
 רוישם גדול עשה ביאתו של הגאון רי"ד סר
 לוביצקי לכנסית "אגודת ישראל" בסיועו
 וכל חברי הנאספים שמחו לקראתו, ובפרט בעה
 שהוכרו כי הגאון הזה נעשה לחבר האגודה
 ונתמנה ליו"ד של ועד הפועל המרכזי בני
 רחבי המדינה, וכבר התחיל עבודתו בעד
 "אגודת ישראל" בכוסטון, שנתיסד סניף
 האגודה בימים האלה, וכמאה חברים נספחו
 להאגודה.

"Eliezer Silver (1882-1968) was a Lithuanian who had studied under Hayyim Ozer Grodzinski of Vilna and Rab Hayyim of Brisk among others. He emigrated to the United States in 1907 and served as rabbi of Orthodox congregations in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, Springfield, Massachusetts, and Cincinnati, Ohio. In 1923 he was elected President of the Union of Orthodox Rabbis and he remained a member of its presidium until his death. He founded the United States branch of Agudat Israel in 1939 and served as its first president" (Encyclopedia Judaica, s.v. "Silver, Eliezer").

12. "Hayyim Ozer Grodzinski (1863-1940) was a talmudic

scholar and one of the spiritual leaders of Lithuanian Orthodoxy. He studied in the yeshivot of Eisheshok and Volozhin, was the leading dayyan of Vilna, participated in the founding conference of the Agudat Israel at Katowice in 1914, served as a leading member of that party's Council of Sages, and was the prime force for spreading its influence in and around Vilna; he was a vehement opponent of Zionism and of secular education for Jews, his aim being to preserve the Torah milieu of the Lithuanian yeshivot and townlets intact. Asked by an Agudat Israel kibbutz whether it was permitted to settle on Jewish National Fund Land, he advised its members, 'Let him who is firm in spirit stay steadfast in his place and not hurry to join the swelling storm ... until God has mercy on His people and He hastens His redemption' (Encyclopedia Judaica, s.v. "Grodzinsky, Hayyim Ozer").

In an excerpt from the eulogy ("On the Breastplate and the Diadem," in Matters of Thought and Criticism, pp.187-194) Soloveitchik pleads for an integration of the spiritual and communal, the halakhic and the political. He defends the view that the arbiters of halakhic matters (the gedolim of the Orthodox rabbinate, all opposed to Zionism) ought to be the arbiters in political matters as well. David Singer called my attention to this eulogy. Dr. Borowitz read and summarized it for me.

Soloveitchik's Agudah affiliation might be viewed as a refutation of Frimer's theory that Soloveitchik was a Zionist sympathizer before he arrived in the United States. In his own defense, Frimer argues that Soloveitchik had no choice but to join the Agudah and that this affiliation proves only that he was for a time anti-Mizrachi, not anti-Zionist. To that Singer retorts, "Nonsense!"

13. Singer and Sokol, op. cit., p. 228.

14. Singer, "Who Are Today's Modern Orthodox?" Sh'ma 13, no. 257 (Sept. 16, 1983):115.

15. הגותו דעתו לצד זה במשנת הרב י"ד סלובייצ'יק יעמוד על עומק זיקתו לציונות. הרי הציונות ביטאה את השאיפה לאחד את החיים היהודיים עם התרבות הכללית ולגשר על תוהו הגיבור שבהווה הגלותית. אין ערוך לסכנה הגלומה בהעזה הציונית להחזיר את העם היהודי למלאותם של חיי התרבות. כי זוהי העזה לעשות את הבלתי אפשרי. וסופה עלול להיות וניחת העולם הדתי. אבל היהודי החצוי בין שני עולמות לא יוכל בשום אופן לוותר עליה.

הן זהו הסיכוי היחיד ליצור ספירה יהודית פרטית בתוך התרבות הכללית. ובוה לקדם את הגאולה. יעל כן, העמדה הנכונה אורתודוקסית מסוג חדש זה מאופיינת בלהט הלאומי-משיחי ובפחד מפניו. וזהו, אמנם, המפתח להבנת יחסו הדו ערכי של י"ד סולובייצ'יק, יחס ההבנה והביקורת, אל הציונות החילונית. מתוך הטיפולוגיה שלו אי אפשר שלא יכיר בלגיטימיות של הבחירה המאפיינת את הציוני החילוני. אי אפשר גם שלא יכיר כי הדרך לגאולה מחייבת סיגול רציני ויסודי של התרבות הכללית בכלכלה, במדיניות, במדע ובאמנות. דרכו של הציוני החילוני היא הכרחית. ועם זאת, היא מסכנת את עצם קיומה של היהדות. לכאורה נובעת מכאן לפחות תמיכה חד משמעית בציונות הדתית המגשרת. אבל האם אפשרית ציונות דתית מגשרת? האם אפשר להלך על החוט הדק מבלי למעוד? תשובה על שאלה זו לעולם לא תהיה רעיונית בלבד. כאן קודמת ההעזה לעשות. אבל האם מקרית היא, לאור הדברים הללו, העובדה כי הרב י"ד סולובייצ'יק העדיף להישאר בגולה ולבטא את זיקתו לציונות, כמו לתרבות הכללית, בתמיכה אמפטיית שהכול יד בה וולתי הגשמה?

(Between Orthodoxy and Religious Humanism, pp. 40-41).

16. These words of Soloveitchik are from his extended essay "The Lonely Man of Faith" (pp. 7, 49). It first appeared in print in 1965, one year before the publication of "Joseph Dreamed a Dream." The similarities are remarkable. Compare the section "Joseph and His Brothers" to the following paragraph from "The Lonely Man of Faith:" "[The contemporary man of faith] looks upon himself as a stranger in modern society which is technically minded, self-centered, and self-loving, almost in a sickly narcissistic fashion, scoring honor upon honor, piling up victory upon victory, reaching for distant galaxies [the sun, moon, and eleven stars?], and seeing in the here-and-now sensible world the only manifestation of being. What can a man of faith like myself, living by a doctrine which has no technical potential, by a law which cannot be tested in the laboratory, steadfast in his loyalty to an eschatological vision whose fulfillment cannot be predicted with any degree of probability, let alone certainty, even by the most complex, advanced mathematical calculations -- what can such a man say to a functional utilitarian society which is saeculum-oriented and whose practical reasons of the mind have long ago supplanted the sensitive reasons of the heart?" (p. 8).

17. Ibid., p.7.

18. Telephone conversation, February 1984.

19. Soloveitchik, "The Lonely Man of Faith," p. 55.

20. Has Soloveitchik successfully stripped his Zionism of all traces of messianism? Singer and Sokol think so: "[Soloveitchik's Zionism] appears remarkably old-fashioned when judged by typical Zionist -- even religious Zionist -- standards.... Soloveitchik does not regard the rise of the State of Israel as an event that has fundamentally (let alone permanently) altered the nature of Jewish life. [He] does not believe that the Jewish state can offer a solution to the problem of anti-Semitism, or that its existence creates any new imperatives or standards of judgement for Jews. There is, in short, not the slightest whiff of messianism in Soloveitchik's Zionism. Now as in the past, he insists, Jews remain obligated to study and practice the Law -- that is the yardstick by which the success or failure of the State of Israel will be measured" (Singer and Sokol, "Joseph Soloveitchik: Lonely Man of Faith," p. 253).

Still, Soloveitchik claims that the rebuilding of Eretz Israel is God's will, and that this acquisition of the land is irrevocable: "No power in the world can conquer it." Is it not then the beginning of the final ingathering?

JOSEPH DREAMED A DREAM AND TOLD IT TO HIS BROTHERS

The God of the Land

It is not possible to acquire the Land of Israel without acquiring, together with the land, something else, more important; the acquisition of the Land of Israel involves not only the physical land but also something else. What? What is included in the acquisition of the land? The God of the land. (The Ramban in [his commentary on the] Humash [Gen. 24:3] interpreted "The God of the land" as "The God of the Land of Israel.")

Judaism has a unique view of the relationship between the Holy One, blessed be He, and man: not only that man belongs to the Creator of the world -- "The soul is Yours and the body Your work; the soul is Yours and the body is Yours" [from the selihot (penitential prayers)]; not only that man is the possession of the Holy One, blessed be He -- "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof, the world and all that dwell therein" [Ps. 24:1]; but also that the Holy One, blessed be He, belongs to man and He, so to speak, is the possession of man.

Is this a novel interpretation? No!

The Torah says, "Gather up and find all of these things...and if you search there¹ for the Lord your God you will find [Him]" [Dt. 4:29]. A Jew finds the Holy One, blessed be He, just as he finds an object and takes possession of it. At times, not infrequently, the Holy One, blessed be He, is, so to speak, lost [to Man] and no one can bring Him back, [like] a lost object which owners have abandoned hope of finding. Modern man does not seek Him and does not wish to know Him. Khrushchev and Mao Tse Tung, in their brutal crassness, have long ago abandoned the Creator of the world. Western man, with his liberalism and sophisticated, decadent stance, sighs and grumbles, "Woe that money is lacking! Certainly faith is a good thing, and the believer is happy, but what can I do if I have no faith?"

Even the so-called religious man who takes part each week in prayer frequently does so in a mechanistic way, and the desire to search for God remains strange to him. In general, it is possible to describe the relationship of "the man of our times" to the Creator of the world as despairing and skeptical. Obviously it is possible for him to search for the true God, with luck find the lost object abandoned by its owners, and acquire possession of it.

The Torah's expression, "You will find [Him]," means: you will acquire and take possession [of Him]. According to the Halacha finding is sometimes equivalent to acquiring. When a Jew begins to pray the Shemonah Esrei² he turns to the Holy One, blessed be He, as "God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob." A two-fold idea is expressed in these six special words. First: the patriarchs belong to the Holy One, blessed be He (Abraham is considered one of the five possessions of the Holy One, blessed be He); second: the Holy One, blessed be He, belongs, so to speak, to the patriarchs. They searched for Him when the entire world around them ridiculed them and the strange search in which they persisted. By searching for Him and finding Him they acquired Him. They inherited the Ein Sof and He is their possession.

The mysterious relationship between the Holy One, blessed be He, and His creations, between the God of Israel and the Community of Israel, finds expression in the wondrous saying of the Sages [Ber. 6:2], "What is written on the tefillin of the Master of the Universe? 'Who is like Your people Israel, a unique nation on the earth?'" We, on our tefillin, describe the relationship of the people of Israel to the Holy One, blessed be He: "Hear O Israel, the Lord, our God, the Lord is unique....

And if you heed My commandments..." And on the tefillin of the Ein Sof, so to speak, our possession of Him is expressed: "I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine."

How do we acquire the Holy One, blessed be He? What sort of acquisition applies to the Owner of all? Lifting up? God forbid. Four cubits? No; by these methods of acquisition one acquires a kab of sesame, scattered fruit, cakes of dried figs, dates, and so forth, but not the Glory of Israel. How is the acquisition of the Glory of Israel expressed? The Torah reveals to us the way to acquire the Holy One, blessed be He: "If you search [there for the Lord Your God you will find Him] if only you seek Him with all your heart and soul" [Dt. 4:29]. Through a single act can a Jew acquire the Master of the Universe: by searching and seeking with all his heart and with all his soul. We all know Rabbi Akiba's homily on "With all your soul [bekhol nafshekha]:" "Even if it costs your life [afilu notel et nafshekha]" [Ber. 63a]. It is possible to acquire the Master of the Universe with blood, with suffering, with stubborn self-sacrifice -- "and through it all we [remain] the Lord's and look to the Lord." In a word, we inherit the Holy One, blessed be He, through sacrifice.

(Acquisition via suffering occurs also in human

relationships. For example, the relationship between fathers and children is based primarily on the difficulty of raising children. The more parents suffer because of their children, the deeper their love for them becomes. "Ephraim is my dear son, a child that is dandled" -- Ephraim is dear to me; he is my child-plaything. "Though I have spoken against him, I will yet remember him" -- for whenever I mention his name I am reminded of the troubles which I suffered because of him; I remember clearly the tremendous worries which gave me no rest, and the hopes which I rested on him. "That is why my heart yearns for him; I will receive him back in love, declares the Lord" [Jer. 31:19-20] -- therefore he is more dear to me than the other children.)

A Purchased Field and Possession of a Burial Place ³

When the Holy One, blessed be He, gave Abraham the Land of Israel He commanded him to acquire the land just as any

other man who purchases land or receives a gift of land must do. We have all studied Nezikin and in particular Baba Batra and we know what constitutes acquisition of land: "Up and walk the length and breadth of the land." The Gemara in Baba Batra, page 100, establishes that walking is understood by the Holy One, blessed be He, to confer possession. "Walk[ing] its length and breadth" effects acquisition, etc. As it is written, "Up! Walk the length and breadth of the land, etc." And the Rabbis? [Why in the face of the Biblical verse do they maintain that by walking alone possession cannot be acquired? Because they consider Abraham's acquisition of land to be a special case:] there [walking sufficed] because of [God's] love [for Abraham]. (From the [comments of] the Rashbam it appears that even the Rabbis thought that the "walking" of Abraham did constitute acquisition; the dispute [with the Rabbis] concerned only the acquisition of other land.) But Abraham understood the words of the Lord both in their plain sense of an act of acquisition, that [his walking] was done as a purely formal act like [the acts of acquisition via] money or contract, and also expressing the symbolism of accepting something (and thus also in a more sublime sense). Abraham thought that for the Land of Israel, the Holy Land, formal acquisition was insufficient because it was temporary, and "You shall not

sell the land in perpetuity because the land belongs to Me" [Lev. 25:23]. In order to acquire the Land of Israel it is necessary to perform another act of acquisition which applies not only to the soil of the Land but also to the God of the Land; and this acquisition is acquisition via suffering, acquisition which cannot be eroded nor cancelled by the efforts or powers of others, and which is, in contrast to the formal halachic acquisition, an acquisition in perpetuity.

From the moment he first set his feet on the ground of the Land of Israel until the great and sublime drama of the Akedah, Abraham never stopped repeating the action which bound him to the land of Israel, bound him eternally. "There he built an altar to the Lord who appeared to him" [Gen. 12:7]. Had Abraham been satisfied with the [purely] formal acquisition, the mundane acquisition of salesmen (i.e., [via] taking hold [of an object]), the Land of Israel would not have become an eternal possession of the community of Israel. Only by building the altar and digging a burial plot did he acquire the Land of Israel for every successive generation.

"Abraham weighed out the silver for Ephron" [Gen. 23:16]. When he performed the purely formal, legal

acquisition via silver, he acquired the field only in an official, superficial sense. "So Ephron's land in Machpelah...passed to Abraham as his possession, in the presence of the Hittites" [Gen. 23:17]. In a legal sense the field belonged to Abraham but it was a purchased field and nothing more: today it belongs to Abraham and tomorrow to someone else, to whomever will buy it from him and pay him more, or to whomever will take it from Abraham by overcoming him with force. But when Abraham dug the burial site in which he buried his beloved Sarah (Sarah, who had sacrificed herself as much as he had, perhaps more so; the same Sarah who built altars in her own right), the field was suddenly elevated from a purchased field to a possessed field, the inheritance of the Patriarchs, which all the power in the world could not take from them. "Afterwards Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of Machpelah.... Thus the field and the cave which was in it passed from the Hittites to Abraham as a possession of a burial site" [Gen. 23:19]. Before this, when the acquisition was merely a financial transaction, the Torah says that Abraham made the purchase "in the eyes of the Hittites" [Gen. 23:18], in their presence. After the burial of Sarah, when the field became a possession, the Torah uses the expression, "as a possession of a burial site from the Hittites" [Gen. 23:20]. It appears that only

by virtue of the burial was the field acquired absolutely "from the Hittites."

Everyone Is Building Altars

The entire secular Zionist Movement, not just the Mizrachi, has acquired the land of Israel, rebuilt its ruins, and merited an independent state through two forms of acquisition: 1) by possession, as the verse prescribes, "Up! Walk the length and width [of the land] because I will give it to you and your offspring." Hundreds of thousands of dunams of land were acquired, trees were planted, swamps and sand dunes were transformed into blooming settlements; they built houses, founded cities, opened factories, paved roads, etc., etc. 2) Nonetheless, it appears that even the secular Jew, the member of a non-religious party, is compelled to acquire not only the Land of Israel but also the God of Israel. Even this Jew, the doubting agnostic and secularist, who is officially a

non-believer and who is determined to explain the drama of Jewish history in superficial rationalistic categories, is compelled to acquire the God of Israel by building an altar on the mountain of Israel and offering a sacrifice on the altar. By planting a tree on the hills of Judah he roots himself in eternity; with the irrigation of an orchard in the Emek, the dew of happiness trickles down from the Glory of Israel, the Creator of the world, even on the unbelievers (who act as though they have no interest in Him).

As was said above, it is possible to achieve the acquisition of the Creator of the world only by building an altar, by [the action prescribed in the verse], "If you search, etc.,.... If you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul." And this acquiring everyone is doing: the religious deliberately, the secular unintentionally. We religious Jews believe that the Jew is always seeking the Creator of the world, unwillingly and willingly, accidentally and intentionally. He searches for Him even when he cries out that he does not need Him. Obviously, happy is the Jew who knows for Whom he searches, for Whom his soul yearns. My heart goes out, however, to those Jews who are impelled by a powerful natural [lit. "stychic"] force towards the Creator of the

world [yet] are determined to suppress those longings. The stubborn denial of the Creator of the world, despite man's instinctive yearning for Him, causes many spiritual and emotional disturbances, confusing minds and hearts. Yet there is nothing in any of this to alter the fact that the more the secular Jew protests that he has no relation whatsoever to holiness, the more he feels in his heart of hearts that he is giving false testimony about himself.

Therefore all the parties build altars, from the Mizrachi ha-Po'el Mizrachi to Mapai and Mapam, and offer sacrifices on them. (And a Jewish offering is always accepted even if the officiant does not intend it for heaven's sake.) Even in prior years, before the Arab pogroms and before the War of Independence, when a guard went out for the night watch, when a treacherous Arab bullet cut short a budding life, or when malaria destroyed young souls, all of the builders of the Land were building altars. With the pogroms in Tel Hai⁴ and in Jaffa in 5681 (1921), in Hebron and in other settlements in 5689 (1929),⁵ in the period of "Restraint"⁶ in the thirties, when Jewish blood was spilled the length and breadth of the Land of Israel, when the Arab bullet and the Arab knife did not distinguish between Hebron yeshiva students and members of leftist kibbutzim (just as Hitler's

furnaces did not distinguish between Hasidim and Bundists), the number of altars multiplied. And above all with the War of Independence, in which Israeli youth demonstrated superhuman courage and self-sacrifice, with graves springing up in every territory of the Land in which lay young girls and boys fallen in battle, the entire Yishuv erected a giant altar on which was repeated once again Abraham's ancient act of acquisition of the Land of Israel and the God of Israel.

Yes, my friends! Even the new secular Yishuv heroically achieved the second irrevocable acquisition of the Land, and in an indirect and unconscious manner it acquired not only the Land of Israel but also the God of Israel. Therefore we have faith that our enemies will not be able, in any way, to cancel this second acquisition (via altars and sacrifices) and the Land of Israel will remain ours forever. The verse "And after Abraham had buried his wife Sarah" has unfortunately been realized in the Land of Israel. It emerges therefore that the Land is not a purchased field, but a possessed field which no power in the world can conquer.

Four Altars

Abraham built four altars. The Torah speaks about three of them in Parashat Lech Lecha [Gen 12:1-17:27]: 1) Immediately upon the opening of the parasha, "Abram took his wife...and they headed toward the Land of Canaan.... The Lord appeared to Abram and said, 'I will give this land to your offspring.' And he built there an altar to the Lord who appeared to him" [Gen.12:5-7]. 2) "From there he moved on to the hill country east of Bethel and pitched his tent, and he built there an altar to the Lord and invoked the Lord by name" [Gen. 12:8]. 3) "The Lord said to Abram, after Lot had parted from him, 'Up! Walk about the land, through its length and breadth, for I give it to you.' And Abram moved his tent, and came to dwell at the terebinths of Mamre which are in Hebron; and he built an altar there to the Lord" [Gen. 13:14]. The building of the fourth altar is recounted in the parasha on the Akedah, "They arrived at the place about which God had told him;

Abraham built an altar there; he laid out the wood, and bound his son Isaac" [Gen. 22:9].

The altar which is associated with "Walk about the land, through its length and breadth.... He built an altar there to the Lord," as I have pointed out above, belongs not only to us. All the Jews who engaged in building the land built that altar. But aside from this altar, in which our movement also has a large part (Tirat Tzevi,⁷ Kefar Etzyon⁸ demonstrated that), our movement built, like Abraham in his time, three additional altars to which the secular movement Hibbat Tzion⁹ has not contributed. Only religious Jews are qualified to build the three other altars because these altars symbolize the unique sacrifices which we have made and continue to make. Therefore our acquisition of the Land of Israel and our tie to it are stronger than the acquisition which ties the secular Zionists to the Land of Israel.

(We state here publicly that we will not budge from our position, despite the pressure on us from the left and from the right. We persist in our work. Opposition reinforces our brazen decision to persist in our plan. We have not built one altar but innumerable altars; we hold fast to the method of Rabbi Akiba, who explained every jot and tittle of Halacha. Every jot -- every obstacle, every

objection -- strengthens our determination and encourages our productivity; thus from every jot there will grow, despite everything, heaps and heaps of halachot.)

Let us dwell on three specific altars which we built. The Sages say that one altar was built when [God first] announced [His gift of] the Land: "The Lord appeared to Abram and said, 'To your offspring I will give this land.' He built there an altar to the Lord who appeared to him" [Gen. 12:7]. This altar was the first which Abraham established before he acquired possession of the Land of Israel by fulfilling the command, "Up! Walk the length and breadth of the land." What sacrifice did Abraham offer on the occasion of the heralding of the land? Simple: the great sacrifice of "Go forth" -- of leaving "your birthplace and your father's house" -- cutting his ties with his family, with his friends, with his companions, with his acquaintances; leaving for a strange place, to search for a strange land whose name he didn't even know, "to the land which I will show you" [Gen. 12:1]. Loneliness is one of the tragic experiences, likely to break a man. But loneliness does not mean being alone; a person can be alone and not lonely and it is possible for a person to find himself at a wedding among hundreds of people and to feel lonely and lost.

Loneliness means the loss of the tie a person has with the world in which he grew up, was educated and spent his childhood years, formed his first impressions and made his first observations. Abraham sacrificed everything and was the loneliest person in the history of mankind. That was the first altar which Abraham built. Such an altar we too established and we have offered great sacrifices on it, on the altar of the heralding of the Land.

Joseph and His Brothers

When the Mizrachi was founded in 5662 (1902) the members established [the principle of] "Go forth from your land, from your birthplace and from your father's house." For everyone who joined the movement was virtually taken far from his spiritual birthplace.

We were lonely just as Joseph, the dreamer, was lonely among his brothers who laughed at him. Our brothers too suspected us of many transgressions and regarded us from a distance. They related to us as Joseph's brothers related

to him: "They saw him from a distance and before he came close to them [they conspired to kill him]" [Gen. 37:18].

It must be said that to be ostracized from the tribes of the Lord (from Levi, from the spiritual leaders of the generation, the religious authorities of Israel -- "They [Levi] shall teach your laws to Jacob and your Torah to Israel [Dt. 33:10];" from Judah, from the leaders of the generation, the real "providers" who were concerned with the needs of the community and whose words on every political and communal issue were like oracles [lit. "words of Urim"] -- "The scepter shall not depart from Judah nor the ruler's staff from between his feet so that tribute shall come to him" [Gen. 49:10]; from Benjamin, from the pious of the generation who lived in holiness and purity within the four cubits of the Halacha and to whom Jews would travel to receive their blessing -- "Beloved of the Lord, [Benjamin] rests securely beside Him, ever does He protect him as he rests between His shoulders" [Dt. 33:12]) was not a pleasant experience. Ultimately even Joseph achieved greatness in Torah, leadership and piety; yet the abyss created between him and his brothers caused him great sorrow. To be set apart from his big brothers -- as it were, "They separated from him" not merely "a minority of the Sanhedrin" but a majority of it -- was a

tragic fact for Joseph. They expelled him from the stiebelach, banished him from rabbinic authority, sent him away from the society of the learned. At every step they humiliated him. Most tragic of all was the fact that in truth the dispute between the Joseph of 5662 (1902) and his brothers, the tribes of the Lord, was based upon a lack of understanding, precisely as the ancient quarrel between Joseph the son of the original Jacob and Joseph's brothers was the result -- "They saw him from a distance" [Gen. 37:18] -- of a lack of communication.

What actually robbed Joseph of his peace [of mind]? Ultimately didn't the Sages say, "What is shown to a person comes from his own innermost thoughts"? For what was Joseph searching, towards what did he aspire? What vision troubled him? An indistinct feeling of insecurity frightened him... About what was he insecure? Joseph of the Humash was not certain that [the situation described in the verse] "Jacob dwelt in the land where his ancestors dwelt" [Gen. 37:1] would last forever. In his ears constantly rang the words, "Your offspring will be strangers" [Gen. 15:13]. He saw himself and his brothers in strange surroundings, far from the land of Canaan, in a new situation and under new living conditions. He saw in his dream, "Behold we were binding sheaves" [Gen. 37:7],

we are no longer in the land of Canaan, we are in the land of Egypt; obviously we can no longer be shepherds: we are engaged in new industry, with new life-forms, ways, and laws; it is no longer possible to make a living from herding sheep. The children of Jacob must learn new trades -- like agriculture, construction, masonry, carpentry, metalwork in gold, silver and bronze -- which will fit the new conditions. Therefore, he dreamed of a new plan in which it would be possible for the unity of the family to be preserved even over the distances to which the Creator of the world would spread them. He thought constantly of how to protect the continuity of the tradition of Abraham in a new economy and in a new civilization.

The brothers did not understand him, for they regarded the future as a continuation of the present. They saw all problems in the framework of life in the land of Canaan, in the land in which their fathers dwelt. In ancient surroundings, in the home town of their fathers, they had no need for new plans, no need for a different economic system.

Joseph of the Humash recounted, "Behold the sun and the moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me" [Gen. 37:9]: there is a secular culture, vast technology which reveals

wonders and which is changing the bases of our life; in the land of Canaan it is possible for us to be gainfully employed without it. Secular culture bears destructive elements, many negative and corrupt aspects. It is likely to be both a blessing and a curse at one and the same time; and as long as it is possible to live without it the better for the soul. But don't you realize that ultimately we will have to come into contact with it? The confrontation will take place not in the land of Canaan, where life moves slowly, but in a new land, a strange land, in which the pace of life is greatly accelerated and every day fundamental changes occur. The decree of the Holy One, blessed be He, that "Your offspring will be strangers in a land not their own" will come to pass sooner or later. I am afraid that in "a land not [our] own" we will not be capable of erecting a divider between ourselves and our surroundings. If we are not prepared for the new conditions the environment will swallow us up! Our intellectual powers will be entirely confused. But if, while there is yet time, we think, we will be ready and prepared for binding sheaves, for "the sun and the moon and eleven stars," for a new economic and social order; we can perpetuate the inheritance of Abraham even in strange surroundings. The Torah of Abraham has great strength, but under what circumstances do these words

apply? They apply only when we are prepared to struggle and when we know exactly what to do in the new surroundings.

But the brothers answered him, "Why must you [tend] God's sheep?" Why must you trouble yourself with the hidden plans of the Holy One, blessed be He? It is not ours to know how or when the Holy One, blessed be He, will carry out His decree that "Your offspring will be strangers." In the meantime we are in the land of Canaan, living our life in holiness and purity, making a living from herding sheep; we need not fear the future. We can be gainfully employed without sheaves, without the sun and the moon and the eleven stars.

But Joseph remained unconvinced. He was not at all confident in the current political and economic status of the House of Jacob in the land of Canaan and he did not cease warning his brothers. "His brothers were jealous of him" [Gen. 37:11]; the harder he tried to convince them, the more stubborn they grew. "Their hate for him increased on account of his dreams and his words" [Gen. 37:8].

Did Joseph fight with his brothers? Certainly! Was their dispute for the sake of heaven? Most certainly!

Joseph, as was explained above, looked upon the fate of the children of Jacob from the perspective of a dark, uncertain, and mysterious future in which the decree "Your offspring will be strangers" would be carried out; he urged preparation to meet that future. All the brothers were of one mind, that it is forbidden to look in the crystal ball too much: "Do not inquire into that which is more wonderful than oneself" -- one must judge the future by the present. We are living in the land of Canaan. We need not nor are we permitted to prepare to meet life in a land we do not know, or a future that remains hidden from us.

In this dispute for the sake of heaven, Providence ruled according to Joseph, and only thanks to Joseph's dreams was the House of Jacob saved from destruction. What would the brothers have done without him when "the famine was severe in the land, and when they had consumed [all that there was] to eat"? Were it not for Joseph's dreams, the entire House of Jacob would have died of famine. Had not "God sent me ahead of you to insure your survival on earth," there would not, God forbid, have been a revival of the tradition of Abraham, and the election of Israel would not have come to pass.

What was the dispute between the Joseph of 5662 (1902)

and his elder brothers? Our elder brothers, the great men of Israel and the holy ones of the Most High, anticipated the future from the perspective of a calm and satisfying present in which the communities of Brisk, Mohilev, Kislovitz, and Lubavitch were at their height; when hundreds and thousands of synagogues were full of people studying Torah and praying (though already the periphery of the camp had caught fire with revolution: a portion of the youth had rebelled against our traditional way of life); when the wholeheartedly pious Jews were the majority of the Israelite nation; when it might be said of the Jew of the street and the Jew of the schoolhouse, "How good and pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together" [Ps. 133:1]. Therefore it was their view that to identify with the Jews of Western Europe, who were for the most part not observant nor great believers, presented a danger to Judaism. They, our brothers, utilized the verse, "Because you have associated with evil, the Lord will bring your work to naught" [II Chron. 20:37]. They completely rejected any negotiation with the secular. Every aspect of their thought, their interests, their feelings, was saturated with holiness. The environment was still infused with great holiness, tradition, and Torah.

The Joseph of 5662 (1902) was like "a prophet who does not know what he is prophesying" . Even he agreed with his elder brothers (with the exception of their insistence upon judging the future through a telescope of the present) that there was no justification at all for associating with "the free-thinkers." But in the heart of the Joseph of 5662 gnawed the intimation of something terrible, an apocalyptic vision of a whirlwind, of a cataclysm, of approaching storm and upheaval bringing destruction in their wake. The Joseph of 5662 (1902) sensed (even though he was unable to formulate his feelings in clear sentences in accordance with the rules of grammar) that the schoolhouses and yeshivas, the lively religious Jewish life of that same Brisk and Minsk, Vilna and Jewish Warsaw, Mohilev and Hummel Vikaterinoslav, would be first of all transformed to secularism and second wiped off the face of the earth. The Joseph of 5662 sensed instinctively that the calm and rest, the quiet and security, in which his elder brothers lived was nothing but an enchanting lie. The Joseph of 5662 saw in the dream "Behold, we are binding sheaves" that we would be assimilated into a new economy, that the lion's share of Judaism would be concentrated in the Western world, where the society is based upon science and "the sun and the moon and the eleven stars" shine; where every scientific

discovery is publicized in the newspapers as the greatest sensation; where every profession is tied to academic education. The Joseph of 5662 (1902) sensed unconsciously that it is forbidden to rely on the status quo, for tremendous changes would take place in Jewish life, and that it was our responsibility to be ready and prepared for those changes. He sensed the coming of a period when there would be no yeshivas in Brisk or Vilna or in Minsk; when America would become a place of Torah; when the Land of Israel, the State of Israel, would be readied as a center of Torah.

We all know the story about "the oven of Achnai" [Ber. 19a]. We can still remember the days when we learned, trembling and with tearful eyes, about Rabbi Joshua ben Hannania, who stood up and cried out, "It is not up to heaven [to decide]!" On matters of halakha, the Holy One, blessed be He, gave the authority to the sages of Israel to rule: impure vs. pure, liable vs. exempt, forbidden vs. permitted. But on historical questions -- questions that concern not an oven, nor a "talent," nor the sum of one hundred or two hundred zuzim, but the fate of the Eternal People -- the Holy One, blessed be He, Himself adjudicates the halakha following the opinion of this or that rabbi. No one is entitled to disobey the legal

ruling of the Holy One, blessed be He. In the dispute between the ancient Joseph and his brothers, thousands of years ago, the Holy One, blessed be He, ruled in accordance with Joseph, and in our days the Creator of the world ruled that the halakha follows the Joseph of 1902 who did not place much trust in the future of the House of Israel in Eastern Europe and dreamed of another land and other conditions. I wish to raise a simple question: what would the yeshivas and the Torah sages who were rescued from the Holocaust, brands snatched from the fire, have done had the Joseph of 1902 not paved the way to the Land of Israel and not made it possible to replant the tree of life of Lithuania and other lands in the Holy Land?

Sometimes I think that were Joseph's elder brothers, the gaonim of world Jewry and God's righteous ones, alive with us at this time they too would see the miracle of God in the establishment of the State, and would offer song and praise to the Holy One, blessed be He. Let us not deceive ourselves, we cannot pin much hope on the Diaspora. Assimilation increases daily. The number of mixed marriages is constantly on the rise. Even in groups such as this one, which logically should be immune, like a wall fortified against the plague, mixed marriages are already found. Still there is some Torah in the Exile. However,

first, the number of learned students of Torah is proportionately very small, and second, it is impossible to anticipate what will happen to the coming generations. We are in a small boat moving slowly in a stormy sea. The future of Torah and traditional Judaism is much more secure even in a non-religious Land of Israel than it is here in the Exile.

So that he would have a share in the new Israel where the Torah, which was driven out of Lithuania and Poland, would find itself a home, the Joseph of 1902 began to build the Land of Israel together with all the "free-thinkers," from whom he was not less distant, in the realm of ideology, than he was from his elder brothers. However, unfortunately, by the time that the tribes of the Lord, thousands of years ago, finally admitted that Joseph was right and begged his forgiveness -- "Forgive, I urge you, the offense and guilt of your brothers who treated you so badly" [Gen. 50:17] -- the ability to see a situation as it truly is and the strength to admit mistakes were lacking from a portion of his brothers. Even today, after Treblinka and Auschwitz, when assimilation demeans and intoxicates a large portion of Diaspora Jewry, and when the State of Israel is defending the Yishuv against the Arab Amalek,¹⁰ they persist in

their stubbornness toward Joseph their brother whom "they see from a distance."

My Affiliation with the Mizrachi

As I have pointed out: the altar of "Go forth" still stands. Many scholars are still suffering. I would rather not speak about others; better that I should speak about myself. I was not born in a Zionist household. My grandparents, my immediate family, my teachers and my companions were far from the Mizrachi. They too took the position, "Why must you tend God's flock?" My alliance with the Mizrachi came in stages. I had many doubts about the truth of the Mizrachi philosophy. Ultimately my roots were deeply planted in the Oral Law, in learning. My entire world view was crystallized in an atmosphere of Rambam, Ravad, of "a Biblical lien," "yosem [meaning uncertain] of the ox and irrevocable sale of the ox," "the principle of Miggo exempts one from the need to give an

oath." However in my family populating the Land of Israel was [considered] an important task. Reb Hayyim was the first to analyze in a Halachic way, to define and formulate on a high intellectual level, the notions of "the holiness of the Land," "the holiness of the quarters of the Temple," sanctification for the time being and for the future," "the coming of all [Israel to the Land of Israel]," "all [Israel's] inhabitants," "[the effect upon the sanctity of the Land when] it is acquired by a Gentile," and so forth.¹¹ The terms represent not merely ideas, abstract concepts and a formalistic innovation, but rather deeply rooted feelings, love, longings, and vision. The Land of Israel, "the holiness of the houses of the walled cities," "the holiness of Jerusalem," were my nursery rhymes; with them I was put to sleep. Reb Hayyim was perhaps the greatest lover of Zion who lived in that generation. He always delighted in the idea that after he raised his children, he would pass on the rabbinate to one of his sons and he himself would settle in the Land of Israel, buy an orchard, and observe the commandments which depend on being in the Land. Whoever has never seen Reb Hayyim praying on Rosh Hashanah or on Yom ha-Kippurim the [prayer which begins] "Now put the fear of You...", pouring out his heart in the three [paragraphs beginning] "Uvechain..." in particular his

supplication with trembling and holiness to fulfill the prayer, "Now O Lord grant honor to Your people, glory to those who revere You, a good hope to those who seek You and justification to those who yearn for You, joy to Your Land and gladness to Your city," has not seen such a moving manifestation of love for Israel and affection for the Land. Whoever has not seen Reb Hayyim on Yom Kippur after the Avodah [service] when he reads, "All this took place when the Temple was firmly established. The High Priest stood and ministered. His generation watched and rejoiced. Happy the eye that saw all this," has never heard a prayer so passionate and overflowing with yearning. His entire being was transported to Jerusalem and involved with the Priests and with the people standing in the Temple court. However the love of Zion and the love of Jerusalem of Reb Hayyim of Brisk had no connection whatsoever with the Zionism of Hayyim Weizmann as Weizmann expressed it in his book, Trial and Error. On the contrary, he was in total disagreement with it. If you think that it was easy for me to adjust to the semi-heretical, semi-enlightened, semi-Russian-revolutionary testament of Hayyim Weizmann in the final chapter of his book, in which he introduces his ideas about the spiritual image of the State of Israel (so that, God forbid, it would not be a theocracy), you are

mistaken. An infinite distance extends between the views of Hayyim Weizmann and the secular Zionist leaders and mine. I cannot understand their philosophy. How is it possible to dream about building the Land of Israel without the God of Israel?

If I now identify with the Mizrachi, in opposition to the tradition of my family, it is only because, as I explained before, I feel that Providence ruled in accordance with Joseph against his brothers, and that She is using secular Jews as agents to implement Her great plans regarding the holy Land of Israel. I also believe that were it not for the Mizrachi there would not be today a place for Torah in Israel. I built an altar on which I sacrificed sleepless nights, doubts, and misgivings. However, the years of Hitler's holocaust, the establishment of the State, and the achievements of the Mizrachi in the Land of Israel have convinced me of the correctness of the path of our movement. The altar still stands even today, and the sacrifice still goes up in smoke upon it. "It is that which rises on the altar every night."

Therefore the Mizrachi must understand that Jews like me and others, whose roots were nursed in the ancient ground of Abaye and Rava, who have affiliated with the movement,

are in Joseph's position, are asked to sacrifice on the altar their peace of mind and their friendships and relationships. The Mizrachi must also understand that we are not following a Zionism plus religion or a religious Zionism. Only one [un-hyphenated] particular proper name characterizes us: Torah. The Land of Israel is holy and precious because the Torah sanctified it and because the future of Torah is tied to it.

"Who Bore These For Me?"¹²

Abraham built the second altar, as the midrash expresses it: "'So that his sons not fall in Ai:' [Abraham] foresaw that [his descendants] would stumble [into sin there] through Achan's transgression,¹³ therefore he prayed for them" [Rashi on Gen. 12:8]. "From there [Abraham] moved on to the hill country east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; and he built there an altar to the Lord and invoked the Lord by name" [Gen. 12:8].

Our movement built an altar to ensure the survival of offspring in the great war of life in which the modern Jew is embroiled. The fundamental problem of the modern Jew today revolves around the education of children. Jews are successful both out of the Land of Israel and in the Land of Israel. All the professions are open [to Jews]; thousands of scholarships await those who seek them. It is very easy to give children a good secular education. Today whoever has even ordinary talents can complete college and even graduate school with scholarships and afterwards receive a position paying ten or fifteen thousand dollars per year.

How is it possible under conditions like these to arouse interest in studying and delving into matters such as "money whose status is in doubt," "whether or not nonspecific designation effects sanctification," "unintentional abandonment [of a lost object]," "commandments require intention," "a commandment which comes through a transgression," "work which is done to produce something other than its normal result," "a small standing object can be considered sufficient for a boundary," in a time when religious learning does not bring a material reward? How is it possible to ask young men to plumb the depths of Rabbenu Tam, the Ramban, Sifte

Ha Cohen, Ketzot, when other professions in graduate schools can bring in much more than can finding a good solution to a tough problem [in the law]? How is it possible to persuade young men to devote three to four years to learning in a kolel, when the street lures and enchants [them] with a powerful force and suppresses all opposition? How is it possible to demand studiousness in the tenets of Torah, to devote all to the Lord, when the "gold and silver, etc...., the brass and iron," the spoils of Jericho lie before him for the taking, and Achan sees "among the spoil a fine Shinar mantle, two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold weighing fifty shekels;" all he need do is reach out his hand and take: "I coveted them and I took them" [Josh. 7:21]? How could a young boy [be asked] to bring a sacrifice to the Lord and restrain himself from doing what Achan did?

In reality, we have been performed a miracle in the United States. The small yeshiva is responsible for this miracle. I myself have been a melamed [in such a school] for not a few years. American youth studies Torah. Germany was not able to create this. In America we have succeeded. Don't ask why. It is a fact. Despite all of the pessimistic predictions, those Jews who believed in the possibility of the creation of a Torah presence in the

very midst of a modern world founded on technology successfully accomplished this. The institutions which they established have succeeded very well. Believe me that frequently when I sit in a yeshiva during a class where they are delving into a difficult sugya, or on motzei-Shabbat in Boston where the average age of listeners is 23 or at the most 25, I ask myself, "'Who bore these for me,' did I?" Didn't all our enemies and those who cast us out say, "[You will be] bereaved and barren, exiled and disdained[. If so,] by whom then were these reared? Was I indeed left all alone?" (They all answered in unison) "And whence did these come? [Isaiah 49:21]."

I am constantly reminded of the saying of Sages in Shabbat, page 85a: "Said R. Jonathan, 'What is meant by 'These were the sons of Seir, the Horite, the inhabitants of the Land, etc.'? [It means that] they were experts in the cultivation of the Land, for they make the land bloom, and they used to say, 'This entire rod [of land is fit] for figs.'" In Jewish education there were also such experts, who considered themselves experts in the nature of education in the Land. These experts said, "[in] this entire rod" -- in Volozhin, Slovodka, Mir, Telz -- it is possible to plant Torah, the [ever]green olive tree, but

"[in] this entire rod" -- in New York, Boston, Chicago -- "[it is possible to plant only] vines" -- it is impossible to teach Gemara to Jewish boys who do not even know Yiddish; "This entire rod" -- the modern Tel Aviv, Kefar ha-Ro'eh, Haifa, and Rehovot -- "[is suitable only for] fig trees" -- are not amenable to yeshivot nor to the chant of "Rava said...."

Then came the small yeshivas in the United States and in Israel and the experts, the children of Seir the Horite, demonstrated that they had no notion of the latent resources of the land; that precisely in "this entire rod" which [they claimed was] suitable only for growing vines and fig trees, we could plant a green olive tree -- productive yeshivas, in which the Torah lives, grows, and develops.

The Mizrachi was perhaps the first movement that had the courage to tell the children of Seir the Horite, the experts in the settlement of land, that they had made a grave mistake. The Mizrachi, with its optimistic principle that it is possible to connect the tents of Jacob with the fertility of the land, and that it is possible to build Torah in a modern society, demonstrated that precisely in modern New York or Boston, precisely in modern Tel Aviv or Haifa, it is possible for Torah to

bloom and grow. The Mizrachi demonstrated that precisely in "the entire rod" of secular values and secular science, it is possible to grow a luxuriant green olive tree of Torah, and that thousands of boys will knock at the doors of the yeshivas which will not be able to accept them for lack of space.

It is an historical fact that the men of the Mizrachi (thirty to forty years ago there were no other Orthodox organizational leaders in America) founded the largest yeshivas in the United States. Rabbi Meir Bar Ilan¹⁴ was the president of the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Yeshiva, Rabbi Gold¹⁵ was one of the founders of the yeshiva "Torah ve-Da'at," etc.

In the Land of Israel itself, all the more so! If Torah has a future in the Land of Israel, if Torah emerges from a dark corner to the center of life, if study of Torah is accepted as something which bestows prestige, this is only thanks to our movement, which rejected, as I have said, the principle of separation, and brought the Torah, the Holy Ark, out into the city streets, as was once done for public fasts. Instead of placing ashes [on the Ark] we put a crown on the Torah in public. For if not for the yeshivas of Bnei Akiva, if not for the yeshiva "Kerem be-Yabneh," if not for the yeshiva-high schools, the horn

of the Torah would not have been raised up so high. They helped to increase the honor of the Torah by bringing the yeshiva into the new Yishuv.¹⁶

The truth is that the Mizrachi, today, is the very largest disseminator of Torah. In the Land of Israel, the Mizrachi founded more yeshivas and institutions for religious education than all of the organizations of rabbis combined. Ironically, the event described in Menachot, page 85b, occurred in the Mizrachi: "Once the people of Laodicea were in need of oil; they appointed an agent and instructed him, 'Go and purchase for us a hundred myriad [manehs'] worth of oil.' He came first to Jerusalem and was told, 'Go to Tyre.' He came to Tyre and was told, 'Go to Gush Halav.' When he came to Gush Halav he was told, 'Go to So-and-so in that field.' [He went there] and found the man breaking up the earth around his olive trees. [The agent] said to him, 'Have you a hundred myriad [manehs'] worth of oil that I require?' 'Yes,' replied the other; 'but wait until I finish my work.' He waited until the other had finished his work. After he had finished his work he threw his tools on his back and went on his way, removing the stones from his path as he went. The agent thought to himself, '[Has this man really got a hundred myriad [manehs'] worth of oil?] I see that

the Jews have merely made fun of me.' As soon as he reached his home town that man's maidservant brought out to him [a bowl of hot water and he washed his hands and his feet. She then brought out to him] a golden bowl of oil and he dipped in it his hands and his feet[, thus fulfilling the verse, 'And let him dip his feet in oil']. After they had eaten and drunk the man measured out to the agent a hundred myriad [manehs] worth of oil, and then asked, 'Do you perhaps need any more oil?' ['I do, indeed,' replied the agent; 'but I have no more money with me.' 'Well, if you wish to buy more, take it, and I will go back with you for the money,' said the man.] He then measured out for him another eighteen myriad [manehs] [worth of oil. It is said that he hired every horse, mule, camel, and ass that he could find in all the Land of Israel. When he reached his home town all the townspeople came out to meet him and applaud him. 'Do not applaud me,' he said to them, 'but this man, my companion, who measured out for me a hundred myriad [manehs] worth of oil, and whom I still owe eighteen myriad [manehs].'] This illustrates the verse, 'There are those who seem to be rich, yet have nothing; there are those who seem to be poor, yet have great wealth' [Prov. 13:7]."

From my childhood I can still remember the complaints

made against the Mizrachi movement. The same accusation can also be heard today: the Mizrachi is not a Torah[-based] movement; it is not interested in the dissemination of Torah; the entire movement is composed of the semi-enlightened, among whom a poem by Bialek is more important than a learned opinion; they oppose yeshivas and the method of learning in yeshivas; they are more interested in Jewish studies than in the Torah of Israel; they are involved in kibbutzim, in milking cows and ploughing the ground. The agent also thought this when he arrived at the village Gush Halav, and found the man cultivating under his olive tree. He saw a simple farmer removing stones and he went on his way; the agent too suspected that the man had no oil, that he was very poor. The agent changed his mind when he turned to the ordinary worker and villager and not to the official olive oil merchants...

But reality shows otherwise: precisely that man, tilling under his olive tree and removing stones from the path, precisely that poor soul, has great wealth. History has transformed the impoverished, the humble pioneer who ploughs and sows, into one who spreads Torah and builds great yeshivas, while the rich man, who speaks pretentiously about Torah, has accomplished nothing.

But, as I have said, the dissemination of Torah is connected with an altar. We all know how difficult it is to build Torah in the Land of Israel of our day (isn't Torah one of the things which is only acquired through suffering?), just as it is difficult in America; from my own experience I know [lit.: "from my flesh I will see" (Job 19:26)] how much effort and toil, sleepless nights and anguish I invest in one yeshiva. About the second altar it is said, "There he built an altar to the Lord and summoned the Lord by name," the altar of education and dissemination of Torah, of the survival of the children: behold, that is the glorious achievement of the Mizrachi. The loss is that we ourselves do not identify with these accomplishments and we do not speak about them enough. I hate publicity and pursuit of honor but at times it is necessary to publicize something in particular. We are too modest. How much do the members of the Mizrachi in America know about our dissemination of Torah in Israel?

We should appear in public not as impoverished but as possessors of great wealth. There is no contradiction between the building of the Land and the building of Torah, between tilling under an olive tree, clearing paths, and building yeshivas. The crown of Torah bestows on us our uniqueness and that which is distinctive about

us.

You Stay Here with the Ass

Abraham built the third¹⁷ altar on Mount Moriah as recounted in the parasha on the Akedah: "They arrived at the place of which God had told him. Abraham built an altar there; he laid out the wood; he bound his son Isaac; he laid him on the altar, on top of the wood."

What constituted the sacrifice which Abraham laid on the altar of the Akedah? The standard answer is that the sacrifice consisted of the fact that Abraham was prepared to sacrifice his son Isaac. True, surely. Yet it seems to me that in addition to Isaac, Abraham sacrificed something else: his close relationships with his acquaintances and friends, with whom he had collaborated over many years in different areas. He did this same thing when he left his land, his birthplace, and his father's house. Abraham was prepared, through the Akedah, to strike not only Isaac, but all of his acquaintances and friends and to be

ostracized from society. When we study the Akedah we encounter a strange detail. The Holy One, blessed be He, said to Abraham, "Take your son, your only one, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah." The following day, Abraham rose in the morning and went on his way. "He rose up early in the morning, saddled his ass, and took his two servants with him as well as Isaac his son and he set out for the place of which God had told him." It seems that Abraham did not want to go by himself; he took with him two close friends as escorts. One was, according to the tradition of the Sages, his son Ishmael, and the other his devoted household manager Eliezer. With it all, we learn from the parasha that when Abraham approached Mt. Moriah, "On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place from afar;" he divided the company and commanded the two servants to stop. "Then Abraham said to his servants, 'You stay here with the ass. The boy and I will go up there; we will worship and we will return to you.'"

The question is asked: if Abraham did not want the two servants to be present at the moment of the binding, why did he order them to wait for him and for Isaac: "You stay here with the ass. The boy and I will go up there"?

It seems to me that in Abraham's command is contained a

complete world view of relations with non-observant Jews. Abraham's relationship with his servants was one of a kind. It was not based on total separation. The road to Mt. Moriah is long and winding, through mountains and valleys, filled with snakes and scorpions and unruly Canaanites who were lying in wait for Abraham and Isaac. In order for Abraham to safely reach Mt. Moriah, in order for him to sanctify that desolate mountain and to call it "Adonai-yireh (the Lord will see), whence the present saying, 'On the mount of the Lord there is vision,'" he needed help even from Ishmael and from Eliezer, who did not exactly identify with Abraham's faith in holiness nor understand the suffering through which he served the Holy One, blessed be He. Nonetheless, willingly or unwillingly, they collaborated with Abraham and accompanied him to Mt. Moriah. "Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his ass and took his two servants with him." Had Abraham established a policy of separation he would have had to go on his way alone; who knows if he would have reached "the place of which God had told him"? "Two are better than one and the three-fold cord is not quickly broken" [Eccl. 4:9,12] Don't raise the difficult question, why did Providence cause this to be so -- cause Ishmael and Eliezer to help Abraham, accompany him to Mt. Moriah, to holiness, to "The Lord will be seen"? This was the will

of the Creator thousands of years ago and this is the Lord's will now as well. Abraham's servants, even Ishmael and Eliezer, had something which tied them to Abraham even if they did not understand the old man.

And so, does this teach us that there was no distinction between the two servants on the one side and Abraham on the other? God forbid. Though Abraham did not lay down a principle of separation, full unity and fraternity would be impossible as long as the two servants were not prepared to worship the Holy One, blessed be He, on Mt. Moriah. Abraham and the servants traveled a considerable distance together, but when they reached a specific place on the way to Mt. Moriah the bond was broken and Abraham separated from the two servants by saying, "You stay here with the ass:" you can not accompany us farther; from this point I am left alone with Isaac. I thank you for your company thus far, for your help and support; however, from here on we are no longer partners, from this moment my motto is "separation": "You stay here with the ass, the boy and I will go on and worship." Indeed, I believe that a day will come when you will understand me completely and we will all be one group -- "We will return to you." But that happy moment is still far from us. Therefore, goodbye and thanks for your help. Suddenly Abraham and

Isaac were alone, having asked their companions to wait for them because the day of the revelation indeed will come, and then the hope of unification will be completely realized.

Do you imagine that it was easy to do that, to speak that way to comrades and dear friends with whom they had wandered three days and three nights? Do you think that it was very pleasant to tell the two servants that from that moment there would be no collaboration between us, that our paths had parted? Do you think that it is natural to say to the two servants that apart from economic, political and military interests, Abraham and Isaac have other aspirations, other visions, other plans, other promises which they, the servants, do not understand? It is easy to imagine that the servants were insulted, that they blamed Abraham and Isaac for factionalism, conceit, and politicking, etc. Whoever has the courage to say, "On the third day.... You stay here with the ass while the boy and I go there and worship," builds a great altar on which he will offer sacrifices of humiliation and loneliness.

We, the members of the Mizrachi, are subscribing to the principle expressed by Abraham in his announcement to the two servants. In order to build the State of Israel we

are marching with all of the parties, for we believe that the State of Israel is the path leading to Mt. Moriah, and because it is clear to us that alone we would not succeed on that journey. Therefore we have taken the position [represented by the verse], "He took his two servants with him and Isaac his son, and they set out for the place of which God had told him." Does this mean that we will travel with anyone to Mt. Moriah, that we are prepared to permit the two servants to desecrate the sanctity of Mt. Moriah, and to worship every idol? No! When the matter pertains to Mt. Moriah, to laws of matrimony, education, Sabbath observance, forbidden work, the rabbinate, instruction, to "who is a Jew,"¹⁸ we declare with pride to the two servants, whoever might be part of our coalition, "You stay here with the ass; the boy and I will go up there and worship." The sanctity of Mt. Moriah must be properly guarded; we alone, the preservers of the tradition, know how to approach Mt. Moriah, how to worship the Holy One, blessed be He, how to build the Sanctuary. "You stay here with the ass." We [will] collaborate with you on every project, but there can be no compromise when it comes to "the place of which God had told him," or the ultimate goal of our thousand-year journey back to the Land of Israel, to "There [l-kh-h]" (the end of all [h-kh-l]).

The Value of Our Work

You all know the reward which we receive for this. Let me make it explicit. [People] are talking about the need to prevent a cultural war in the Land of Israel. That is a mistake. A cultural war has already spread. Whoever reads the secular newspapers in Israel and certain articles published here in the Anglo-Jewish press about religious Jews and the Israeli rabbinate remembers [the newspaper] "Emes" [edited by] Litvakov in Moscow in the '20s.¹⁹

Who bears the burden? Who is attacked? Are they the rock throwers? No! No one is angry with them because no one is afraid of them. To the contrary, they are regarded as exotic characters, who serve as a means of attracting tourists. They attack our members, the members of the Mizrachi, the avant-garde of the religious Jews in Israel, who are doing exactly the same thing that Abraham our father did before them: they travel a portion of the way

with the secular parties and suddenly they say to the other members of the coalition, "You stay here with the ass and the boy and I will go up there and worship and return to you."

The fate of Judaism in the entire world depends on the results of the struggle over the issue of religion and the state. For if, God forbid, they were to abolish religious marriage in Israel, if they were to abolish the civic Sabbath laws, the separation between religion and the state would go further: they would abolish religious education, and perhaps even more. It is even possible that Sunday might be established as the day of rest and the entire calendar be changed. One must not laugh at the stupid rhetoric of separation between religion and state. The fate of Judaism rests in the balance and our movement is the guard assigned to the walls of Jerusalem.

The strength of our representatives in the Land of Israel would be much greater were our movement here in the United States growing larger. Every one of us, lay leaders, rabbis, young and old, must join our movement because thanks to our affiliation with them we [have been able to] show that we are all united for the sake of the Land of Israel (in which inheres holiness), in terms of the slogan, "You stay here with the ass, the boy and I

will go up there and worship." The Land of Israel will be a tremendously constructive factor in the survival of the nation or, God forbid, it will have a negative influence. Mother Deborah said, "'Curse Meroz!' said the angel of the Lord. 'Bitterly curse its inhabitants because they came not to the aid of the Lord among the warriors!'" [Judges 5:23]. When the victory over Sisera is already certain, what will we say, we who remain in the midst of the war? It doesn't matter who Meroz was, a super-star or a great warrior, a very influential man -- he refrained from joining the warriors who were fighting for the perpetuation of Israel. The Mizrachi is building the altar of "You stay here with the ass, the boy and I will go up there and worship." We must all surround the altar: "I will wash my hands in innocence, so will I compass your altar" [Ps. 26:6].

But There Are Two Paths Before Me

It is obvious that we make mistakes, even iniquities;

certainly we do not always act as we should; we are immersed in a [constant] struggle, and here we are, a living movement, and in that role we are bound to err sometimes. I have already said that there are questions to which short and clear-cut answers cannot be found in the Shulchan Aruch; [in those cases] it is necessary to rule intuitively. At times it is impossible to know whether or not the ruling was correct. For negators and zealots it is very easy to solve every sort of problem; they see the entire world in black and white. But for us, in many cases, it is difficult to decide if we have reached the point at which we must separate from "the two servants" and say to them, "You stay here with the ass, the boy and I will go up there." Two by two we wage the war together with "the two servants" and our blood is intermingled on the battlefields of the Negev and the North; our graves are found in the same military cemeteries, and our kibbutzim are found next to one another. Who can boast that he has even a glimmer of the prophetic illumination or courageous will of Abraham our father? Obviously we cannot say with certainty that in particular events we acted one hundred percent correctly. Therefore we recite a confession from time to time and beat our breasts.

The Gemara recounts, "When Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai fell ill, his disciples went in to visit him. When he saw them he began to weep. His disciples said to him: Lamp of Israel, pillar of the right hand, mighty hammer! Why are you weeping? He replied: If I were being taken today before a human king who is here today and tomorrow in the grave, whose anger if he is angry with me does not last for ever, who if he imprisons me does not imprison me for ever and who if he puts me to death does not put me to everlasting death, and whom I can persuade with words and bribe with money, even so would I weep. Now that I am being taken before the supreme King of Kings, the Holy One, blessed be He, who lives and endures for ever and ever, whose anger, if He is angry with me, is an everlasting anger, who if He imprisons me imprisons me for ever, who if He puts me to death puts me to death for ever, and whom I cannot persuade with words or bribe with money -- nay more, when there are two ways before me, one leading to Paradise and the other to Gehinnom, and I do not know by which I shall be taken, shall I not weep?" [Berakhot 28b].

Everyone asks, why did he have to add, "Nay more, when there are two ways before me"? The interpreters answer that in the last sentence, "Nay more," Rabbi Yohanan ben

Zakkai hinted about the great fear that gnawed at his mind all the years that he spent in Yavneh, from the time of the destruction of the Temple. Years before he had ruled on a serious question and never knew whether or not he had ruled well.

When Vespasian Caesar turned to Rabbi Yohanan ben Zakkai [saying], "Whatever you ask I will give you," Rabbi Yohanan ben Zakkai answered immediately, "Give me Yavneh and its sages, etc." The Gemara recounts, "Rabbi Joseph said, and some say Rabbi Akiba said, 'He turns the wise backward' [Is. 44:25]. He should have asked him to leave them alone at that time." Wasn't he able to ask that Jerusalem and the Sanctuary be saved? The Gemarah continues, "Because Rabbi Yohanan ben Zakkai thought at that moment that perhaps so much he would not grant, and then there would have been no relief whatever" [Git. 56b] -- in other words, at a huge request such as that, such as saving Jerusalem, Vespasian would have balked; then the Jewish people would lose both of them: Jerusalem and the sages of Yavneh. Rabbi Yohanan ben Zakkai had one minute to make that decision. His decision was intuitive. Then, who could foresee how Vespasian would have responded to the request to save Jerusalem? The question was a serious question, perhaps the most serious in the history of

Israel, and Rabbi Yohanan ben Zakkai had to decide by himself, without consultation with his fellows, in the middle of a conversation. Obviously he could never be sure that he had decided correctly. On the one hand, it seems to me that he could have persuaded Vespasian to save Jerusalem, as Rav Joseph and Rabbi Akiva thought. His heart bled because he did not request that. On the other hand, he could not place the sages of Yavneh and the Oral Law in possible danger. Despite the sanctity and importance of the Sanctuary, the survival of the nation was not dependent on it. But without the Oral Law the nation could not survive for even a short time. It is difficult for us to imagine how great was Yohanan ben Zakkai's sorrow, how much anguish he suffered, how many sleepless nights and sorrowful days he passed because of this doubt. In the last moments of his life, when he was bidding his students farewell, he emphasized that more than anything he feared the accounting he would have to give to the Holy One, blessed be He, for the decision on this question. There were two paths, one the correct one and the second the incorrect one. One leads to the Garden of Eden, the second to Gehinnom; but no mortal can know, with respect to a decision like this, whether or not he has taken the correct road.

If the great Rabbi Yohanan ben Zakkai did not refrain from confessing for that historic decision, certainly the dilemma of two paths must always be before us, and we must not boast that we always acted as we should.

Like Abraham in his time we pray to the Holy One, blessed be He ([where the Torah says,] "Abraham named that place," the Targum interprets, "And Abraham prayed"), that the Lord will see, that the Holy One, blessed be He, will see our distress, our intentions, our humiliation, that He will see the anguish with which we act in certain situations when we must say to the two servants, "You stay here with the ass, the boy and I will go up there," and that He will forgive us our mistakes.

The source of our errors is our love for the Creator of the world and for the Torah. "Whence the present saying, 'On the mount of the Lord it will be seen.'" Our ideals and the aspirations for which we stand and for which we struggle under unpleasant conditions "will be seen," will be realized. All of them, Abraham, Isaac, and the two servants, will suddenly see "the place from afar," and together they will walk to Mt. Moriah.

1. "But If You Search There" is the title of one of Soloveitchik's major essays (Hadarom 47 [1978]:1-83.)

2. The Prayer par excellence recited thrice daily by every observant Jewish man, which begins, "Blessed are You, O Lord, our God and God of our fathers, God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob...."

3. Gen. 23:4.

4. "Tel Hai [is a] settlement in N. Israel, on the N.W. rim of the Huleh Valley, S. of Kefar Giladi. Tel Hai, founded in 1918, was originally one of three outposts established in this area to guard outlying Jewish land. The 'Shepherd's Group' of Ha-Shomer Association constituted the first settlers; one year later this group dispersed and another took its place. After the Huleh Valley was marked for inclusion in the French Mandate territory of Syria, Arabs revolting against the French attacked the cluster of small Jewish settlements there. Joseph Trumpeldor and seven comrades fell in the defense of Tel Hai on 11 Adar 5680 (1920). His last words, 'It is good to die for our country,' are engraved on the pediment of the statue of a roaring lion marking their grave. The defense of Tel Hai has become a part of Israel's national lore, and each year Tel Hai day is celebrated by youth gatherings and visits to Tel Hai and similar sites" (Encyclopedia Judaica, s.v. "Tel Hai").

"The stand against the Arabs at Tel Hai in March 1920, during which Trumpeldor and several of his comrades fell in battle, became a symbol of Jewish resistance both in Eretz Israel and in the Diaspora. It also established a new principle in the Yishuv's defense policy -- 'No Jewish settlement is to be abandoned for any security consideration whatsoever' (Encyclopedia Judaica, s.v. "Israel, State of [Defense Forces]").

5. "The year 1929 dealt a heavy blow to the Jewish settlement with the killing of many of Hebron's Jews by Arab rioters. The assault was well planned and its aim was well defined; the elimination of the Jewish settlement of Hebron. The rioters did not spare women, children, or the aged; the British remained passive. Sixty-seven were killed, 60 wounded, the community was destroyed, synagogues razed, and Torah scrolls burned. However, those who remained did not surrender and 35 families went

to resettle in 1931" (Encyclopedia Judaica, s.v. "Hebron").

"The Arab riots of August 1929 changed the attitude of the Yishuv and the Zionist Organization toward the Haganah. It had become evident that the bloodiest anti-Jewish riots and the heaviest looting had occurred in those places where there was no Haganah (such as Hebron) or where the Haganah was weak (as in Safed)" (Encyclopedia Judaica, s.v. "Israel, State of [Defense Forces]").

6. "The Policy of Restraint. 1936-39, the years of Arab rebellion, in which the yishuv in both the cities and the countryside was under a perpetual siege and was attacked by Arab guerilla bands, were the years in which the Haganah matured and developed from a militia into a military body. It confronted riots by using methods learned from the previous disturbances. The Jewish quarters and settlements in the cities and countryside were surrounded by defense devices: wire fences, concrete positions, trenches, communication trenches, and floodlights. The Arabs made practically no attempts to attack these fortified areas, but they destroyed the harvests in the fields, chopped down orchards and forests, tried to disrupt Jewish transportation on the roads, and set out on a terrorist campaign that affected casual passersby, women, and children.

"With the outbreak of the riots, the Jewish Agency declared that the yishuv's response to Arab acts of terror would be "restraint" (havlagah). In addition to the moral side of the question, the Jewish Agency believed that a policy of restraint would lead to a positive response from the British authorities who would provide the beleaguered Jews with arms" (Encyclopedia Judaica, s.v. "Haganah").

7. "Tirat Tzevi, kibbutz in central Israel, 6 mi....S.E. of Beth-Shean, affiliated with Ha-Kibbutz ha-Dati. Tirat Tzevi was founded in 1937 as one of the first, and the southernmost, of the tower and stockade outposts in the Beth-Shean Valley, by Ha-Po'el ha-Mizrachi pioneers from central Europe. In the 1936-39 Arab riots, Tirat Tzevi had to repulse frequent attacks. In the early stage of the War of Independence (1948), strong Arab forces commanded by Fawzi al-Kaukji assaulted Tirat Tzevi but were beaten back after suffering heavy casualties. After the Six-Day War (1967), the kibbutz became the object of repeated shelling from beyond the nearby Jordan border. Since its founding, Tirat Tzevi has occupied a central place in the religious settlement movement, and its members are active

in religious study and education. In 1968, the kibbutz had 385 inhabitants. Its farming consists of irrigated field and fodder crops, carp ponds, etc., and it has a sausage and smoked-meat factory. Its name 'Castle of Tzevi' commemorates Rabbi Tzevi Hirsch Kalischer" (Encyclopedia Judaica, s.v. "Tirat Tzevi").

8. "Kefar Etzyon..., kibbutz in the Hebron Hills about 14 mi....S. of Jerusalem, affiliated to Ha-Kibbutz ha-Dati.... In 1943, Kevutzat Avraham of Ha-Kibbutz ha-Dati, whose members hailed from Poland, founded Kefar Etzyon, the first of the four villages constituting the Etzyon Bloc (the others were Massu'ot Yitzhak, Ein Tzurim, and Revadim). The kibbutz members worked in afforestation and developed farm branches. From the end of 1947 the kibbutz repelled frequent Arab attacks. It also improved its strategic position and harassed Arab communications sent to reinforce Arab forces on the Jerusalem front. A unit of 35 men (remembered in Hebrew as "Ha-Lamed-He") of Palmah and Haganah members from Jerusalem making its way on foot from Hartuv to reinforce the Etzyon Bloc was intercepted by Arabs and all its members killed (Jan. 16, 1948). A relief convoy suffered severe losses on March 27. On May 12, the Arab Legion and vast numbers of Arab irregulars mounted the final assault on the Bloc, which two days later succumbed against overwhelming odds. Most of the defenders of Kefar Etzyon, men and women, were massacred by an Arab mob after having capitulated to the Arab Legion. The Arabs totally obliterated all traces of the Jewish villages and an Arab Legion camp was set up on the site. The Bloc area, together with the Hebron Hills, was taken by the Israel Army in the Six-Day War on June 7, 1967. In September 1967, kibbutz Kefar Etzyon was renewed by a group of Ha-Kibbutz ha-Dati which included children of the original settlers massacred in 1948. The new kibbutz set up industrial branches along with farming" (Encyclopedia Judaica, s.v. "Kefar Etzyon").

9. "Hibbat Zion (... 'Love of Zion'), the movement that constituted the intermediate link between the forerunners of Zionism in the middle of the 19th century and the beginnings of political Zionism with the appearance of Theodor Herzl and the First Zionist Congress in 1897. The adherents of Hibbat Zion, called Hovevei Zion ('Lovers of Zion'), were a widespread movement among the Jewish masses of Russia and Rumania, but groups of Hovevei Zion also existed in Western Europe and the United States. Originally, the declared aim of Hibbat Zion was not different from that of its predecessors, the forerunners of Zionism, and of the subsequent political Zionist

movement, namely, to solve the problem of the abnormal Jewish life in the dispersion by a return of the Jewish people to Eretz Israel, settlement on the land on a large scale, and attaining the recognition of the major powers for this purpose (see, e.g., Leon Pinsker and his program). But, in the early 1880s, when aliyah to Eretz Israel from Eastern Europe began, mainly in the wake of the Russian pogroms, and the first Jewish agricultural settlements in Eretz Israel were established, the Hovevei Zion concentrated their means and efforts in encouraging and strengthening the movement toward aliyah and settlement and not in the political field. Conditions in Russia did not permit open political activity and forced the Russian Hovevei Zion to engage in 'practical' work only.

"In Western Europe as well, where Jews were permitted more freedom in this field, members of Hibbat Zion were not prepared to carry on the political cause of Zionism, basically because of fears that their patriotism would be suspect. Thus the efforts of Hovevei Zion turned de facto into philanthropic activity of limited scope and with minor results. Were it not for the aid of Baron Edmond de Rothschild, it is doubtful whether Hovevei Zion would have been able to maintain the first settlements.

"When Herzl began his activities, he was not aware of the political Zionist idea that had originally inspired the Hibbat Zion movement, and at first he negated the value of the existent small-scale settlement activity that was carried out semi-illegally, against the wishes of the Ottoman regime, and referred to it as 'infiltration.' The Hovevei Zion in the West reacted with reservation toward Herzl and continued their philanthropic aid to both the old and the new yishuv by means of Ezra and other institutions. Hovevei Zion in Eastern Europe, however, mostly joined Herzl, but disassociated themselves from his negative approach to practical settlement work in Eretz Israel and continued to support the yishuv. This difference in approach was the source of friction during Herzl's time and afterward between the 'political' and the 'practical' Zionists, until the consolidation of 'synthetic Zionism' after David Wolffsohn resigned from the presidency of the World Zionist Organization (1911). Hibbat Zion was in effect the first mass movement to provide Herzl with wide popular support" (Encyclopedia Judaica, s.v. "Hibbat Zion").

10. Amalek, a descendant of Esau, fought against Israel in the wilderness. Amalek symbolizes a perpetual enemy of

Israel, and of the God of Israel. "The Lord will be at war with Amalek throughout the ages" [Gen. 17:14-16].

11. "Reb Hayyim Soloveitchik (1853-1918), known as Rabbi Hayyim Brisker, Soloveitchik's grandfather, developed a unique, highly analytical method of Talmud study emphasizing 'incisive analysis, exact definition, precise classification, and critical independence'" (Singer and Sokol, "Joseph Soloveitchik: Lonely Man of Faith," Modern Judaism 2 (1982):230, quoting Aharon Lichtenstein, "Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik," in Simon Noveck (ed.), Great Jewish Thinkers of the Twentieth Century, New York, 1963, p.283).

12. Isaiah 49:21.

13. God promised to deliver Jericho and her king and her warriors into Joshua's hands with the proviso that "You must beware of that which is proscribed, or else you will be proscribed [i. e., put to death]: if you take anything from that which is proscribed, you will cause the camp of Israel to be proscribed; you will bring calamity upon it. All the silver and gold and objects of copper and iron are consecrated to the Lord; they must go into the treasury of the Lord [Josh. 6:18-19]." The Israelites, however, violated the proscription: Achan son of Carmi son of Zabdi son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of that which was proscribed, and the Lord was incensed with the Israelites [Josh. 7:1]." Achan confessed, "It is true, I have sinned against the Lord, the God of Israel. This is what I did: I saw among the spoil a fine Shinar mantle, two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold weighing fifty shekels, and I coveted them and took them [Josh. 7:20-21]." As punishment Joshua's men were routed by the men of Ai and the thief Achan was stoned.

14. "Meir Bar-Ilan (Berlin) (1880-1949) [was a] leader of religious Zionism. Bar-Ilan was born in Volozhin, Russia, the son of R. Naphtali Tzevi Judah Berlin. He completed his studies in yeshivot at Volozhin, Telz, Brisk (Brest-Litovsk), and Novogrudok. As a young man he joined the Mizrachi movement, representing it at the Seventh Zionist congress (1905), at which, unlike the majority of Mizrachi delegates, he voted against the Uganda Scheme. In 1911 he was appointed secretary of the world Mizrachi movement, working in Berlin, and he coined the Mizrachi slogan ..., 'The land of Israel for the people of Israel according to the Torah of Israel.' He moved to the United States in 1915, served as president of the U.S. Mizrachi.... In 1926 Bar-Ilan settled in Jerusalem where he served as president of the World Mizrachi center and as

the Mizrachi representative in Zionist and Yishuv institutions.... He initiated and organized the publishing of the Talmudic Encyclopedia, begun in 1947. He also founded the institute for the publication of a new complete edition of the Talmud. Bar-Ilan University near Tel-Aviv, founded by the American Mizrachi movement, is named in his honor" (Encyclopedia Judaica, s.v. "Bar-Ilan (Berlin), Meir").

15. "Gold, Wolf (Ze'ev; 1889-1956) [was a] rabbi [and] leader of religious Zionism. Born in Szczeczin, Poland,...in 1907 he emigrated to the U.S., where he served several congregations [from San Francisco to New York.]... Everywhere he engaged in educational and communal activities, founding a Hebrew school (Williamsburgh Talmud Torah), a yeshiva ('Torah Ve-Da'at'), a hospital.... Gold was from the beginning in the forefront of Zionist workers in the U.S.: in the Order of the Sons of Zion, and the Zionist funds; he was a delegate to all Zionist Congresses and a member of the Zionist General Council from 1923. From 1913 he was active in the Mizrachi movement, which, together with his lifelong friend M. Bar-Ilan (Berlin), he organized in the U.S., and serving as presiden of the American Mizrachi 1932-35.... He settled in Eretz Israel in 1935. With the establishment of the State of Israel he became a member of the Provisional Council of State and for some time headed the Jewish Agency's Department for the Development of Jerusalem and in 1951 the Department for Torah Education and Culture. In that capacity Gold did much for the establishment of schools and other educational institutions in various parts of the Diaspora -- in North Africa in particular" (Encyclopedia Judaica, s.v. "Gold, Wolf").

16. "In 1920 an agreement was reached in the World Zionist Organization that ensured Mizrachi autonomy in the field of religious education in Erez Israel. An educational program began to be designed, followed by the establishment of a network of Mizrachi schools, which included kindergartens, elementary schools, high schools, yeshivot, vocational schools and teachers' seminaries. The educational network of Mizrachi continued to exist as a separate trend in Israel until the establishment of the State religious school system in the 1953/54 school year.... The large majority of Mizrachi schools...were integrated into the new framework of governmental religious education. The yeshivot have been the most outstanding achievement of Mizrachi education. In the high school-yeshivot of Benei Akiva, students receive both

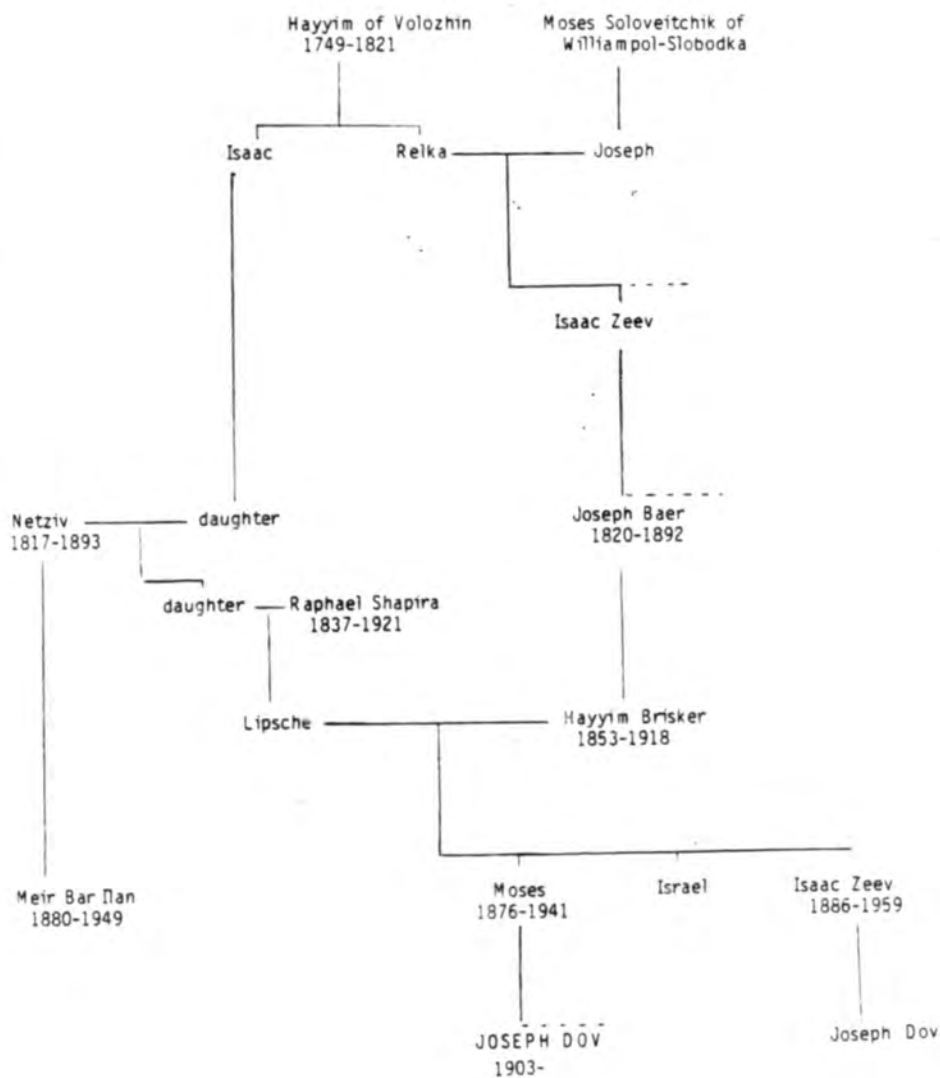
a yeshiva and general education; in four girls' schools the educational program is parallel to that of the yeshivot. The network includes Midrashiat No'am in Pardes Hannah, "Torah and Melakhah" yeshivot, the agricultural yeshivah at Kefar ha-Ro'eh, and the yeshivah for higher studies at Kerem Yavneh. At Bar-Ilan University in Ramat Gan, which was established by Mizrachi in the United States, there were more than 7,000 students in 1970, with extensions in Safed, Ashkelon, and the Jordan Valley. After the 20th world conference of Mizrachi (1962), the educational work of the movement was administered by the Center for Religious Education in Israel, affiliated with the world center of Mizrachi-Ha-Po'el ha-Mizrachi and the movement in Israel" (Encyclopaedia Judaica, s.v. "Mizrachi; Education Work").

17. Actually this is the fourth altar which Abraham built. By "third" Soloveitchik means the third of the three altars which only the religious have constructed.

18. "In 1958 a heated controversy arose over the ruling of the minister of interior, Israel Bar-Yehudah of Ahdut ha-Avodah, that a person declaring in good faith that he was a Jew by nationality should be so recorded in the Population Register and that minors should be registered according to the declaration of their parents. The National Religious Party objected to anyone being registered as a Jew by nationality unless he were recognized by rabbinical law as a Jew by religion (i.e., born of a Jewish mother or converted according to the halakhah) and resigned from the government in protest. A cabinet committee appointed to reconsider the question invited Jewish scholars and religious leaders the world over to express their opinions, which were overwhelmingly in support of the halakhic ruling. The matter was left in abeyance until March 1960, when Hayyim Moshe Shapira, the N.R.P. leader who had rejoined the cabinet as minister of the interior, issued new regulations in keeping with the rabbinical interpretation" (Encyclopedia Judaica, s.v. "Israel, State of (Historical Survey)").

19. "Litvakov, Moshe (1875-1938?) [was a] Yiddish writer and editor, and communist leader.... From 1924 he edited Emes, the principal Yiddish organ of the Communist Party [in Moscow]. In its columns he demanded the uprooting of Jewish religious observances and Jewish national aspirations" (Encyclopaedia Judaica, s.v. "Litvakov, Moshe").

The Soloveitchik Family Tree *



* Based upon the Encyclopaedia Judaica, s.v. "Berlin, Naphtali Zevi Judah" and "Soloveitchik Family".

Biblical and Rabbinic Sources

Genesis 12:1,5-7,8; 13:14; 15:13; 22:5,9,14; 23:4,16-20;
37:1,7,8,9,11,18; 49:10; 50:17

Leviticus 25:23

Deuteronomy 4:29; 33:10,12

Joshua 7:20-21

Judges 5:23

Isaiah 49:21

Jeremiah 31:19-20

Psalms 24:1; 26:6; 133:1

Job 19:20

Ecclesiastes 4:9,12

II Chronicles 20:37

Targum on Genesis 22:14

Babylonian Talmud:
Berachot 6:2; 19a; 28b; 63a
Baba Batra 100
Shabbat 85a
Menachot 85b
Gittin 56b

Liturgy:
Shemona Esrei
Selichot
Uvechain

Rashi on Genesis 12:8

Ramban on Genesis 24:3

Names, Dates and Places*

Khrushchev
Mao Tse Tung
Mizrachi
Mapai
Mapam
Pogroms in Tel Hai and Jaffa in 1921
Pogrom in Hebron in 1920
Period of Restraint
War of Independence
Tirat Tzevi
Kefar Etzyon
Hibbat Tzion
1902, founding of Mizrachi
Brisk
Mohilev
Kislovitz
Lubavitch
Minsk
Vilna
Warsaw
Mohilev
Hummel
Vikaterinoslav
Lithuania
Poland
Treblinka
Auschwitz
Weizmann
Boston
Chicago
New York
Tel Aviv
Kefar Haroeh
Haifa
Rehovot
Meir Bar Ilan
Rabbi Gold
Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Yeshiva
Torah Ve-Daat
Yeshivas of Benei Akiva
Kerem be-Yavneh
Litvakov's Emes
The battlefields of the Negev and the North

*Listed in the order in which they appear in the speech

A Sample from Halakhic Man*

This idea of the dialectic (which was introduced by Kierkegaard and Barth into the concept of the metamorphosis of the religious process) and the view of the antinomian structure of the religious experience (which was refined by Otto in his book The Idea of the Holy) both refute the notion of the religious person currently reigning in the public sphere (both in Protestant circles and within liberal and Conservative American Judaism) that the religious experience is extremely simple, that it involves neither the spiritual complexity which is found in the consciousness of secular culture nor the emotional trauma and agonizing involved in the development and perfection of man's spiritual personality.

This popular view claims that the religious experience is simple and neat, delicate and soft; yea, it is a river of paradise for the bitter of soul, still waters for the depressed. The man who "comes in from the field tired"-- from the battlefields and wars of life, from the secular domain so steeped in doubts and worries, refutations and denials, contradiction and struggling-- falls on religion like an infant on its mother's breast and finds in her bosom a shelter for his head, a nest for his unanswered prayers, and consolation for all of his dissappointments and troubles.

This view is partly rooted in the most ancient strata of Christianity, partly rooted in modern Pragmatic philosophy, and largely stemming from purely practical considerations and motives. The spokesmen of religion wish to exploit the impulse for rebellion-against-knowledge that pulsates at times in the soul of cultured man, the yearning to break free from the chains of culture--the child of knowledge, which weighs upon man with its tough questions, its doubts and its problems-- and the longing to flee from the turbulence of life to an island enchanted with peace and quiet and to surrender there to the ideal of naturalism and vitalism.

The Rousseauian ideology left its imprint on the entire Romantic movement from the beginning of its growth to its (tragic!) manifestations in the consciousness of contemporary man. [And therefore,] the leaders of religious congregations are inclined to portray religion with dazzling colors, which reflect

* Ish Hahalakhah : Gilui Venistar, Jerusalem, 1979, pp. 11-12, note 4 Translation, my own

themselves in the form of a poetic Arcadia, as a realm of simplicity, innocence, and tranquility. Most of the Revivalist sermons are devoted half to hell fire and half to a description of this utopian tranquility which religion bestows on man. And that which in these sermons appears in a primitive, distorted, patchwork form, at times with childlike simplicity and shallow faith, is "refined" and "purified" in the crucible of popular "philosophy" and "theology" and becomes a universal religious outlook.

Do you wish to buy rest without the price of the agonies of the spirit? Go ye to religion. Do you desire psychic equilibrium which does not depend on a gradual process of development? Go ye to religion. Do you want spiritual wholeness and completeness with spiritual satisfaction and contentment, without struggles and trials of consciousness? Go ye to religion.

"Go from your land" -- full of anger, pain, and tension, "from your birthplace" -- the stormy, raging, and tumultuous, "to the land" -- sheltered with the quiet of peace and tranquility, to Arcadia, for there reigns religion.

The leap from the secular world to the religious world is extremely easy. Here there is no period of suffering with all of its pains and tribulations. A person may acquire spiritual peace in a single moment.



* This is a graphic representation of the flow of Soloveitchik's argument in the shiur, "Expiation, Suffering and Redemption," On Repentance, Edited by Pinchas H. Peli. Urot Press:Jerusalem, 1980, pp.289-343

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