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Manna



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The cover picture is a design by
Roman Halter for the Ark doors in a
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TRAINING RABBIS COSTS MONEY AND MORE

IT IS A NICE COINCIDENCE that the future of rabbinic training in Britain now rests substantially in the hands of two Jonathans. Rabbi Dr. Jonathan Sacks has been Principal of Jews College for a year now. He is to be joined by Rabbi Dr. Jonathan Magonet who has been elected Principal of Leo Baeck College.

The similarities go deeper than name. Both were born in London. Both are English University educated and little more than five years separates their dates of birth. Both are charming, urbane and highly intelligent. Both could have pursued successful secular careers — Sacks as an academic philosopher, Magonet as a psychiatrist — and both care deeply about the future of Anglo-Jewry. In one sense it is true that Anglo-Jewry cannot be so impoverished if it is capable of producing two such men. On the other hand, that both should have achieved positions of such responsibility so young and with relatively little relevant experience is a testimony to a certain lack of competition.

One might add that for a brief moment they both taught the same (Leo Baeck College) students but such is the lamentable state of inter-community relations today that it will be a major surprise if either is seen entering the other's establishment, let alone pooling ideas, sharing experiences and swapping classrooms.

A recent Church of England report on the state of rural clergy complains of lack of excitement and content in parish work, the boredom of many sermons, an inability to relate to the needs of congregants and of the danger of spreading clerical services too thinly across parishes. Analogies between the clergy and the rabbinate have been considerably unhelpful, spreading an expectation of rabbis as sick visitors and kaddish sayers. But in this regard the similarities are alarmingly apparent. The need for highly intelligent, articulate and stimulating rabbis able to relate to people and communicate a love of God and Torah is acute. That both Jonathans should succeed in increasing the supply is crucial to the vitality and viability of British Jewry.

If Jonathan Sacks is to succeed, he will have to overcome the resistance to the production of a rabbinate actually suited to the needs of contemporary orthodox congregations. His disastrous review of Louis Jacobs' *Tree of Life* betrayed a need to underline his orthodox credentials and revealed the deep conflict between his natural liberal orthodox inclinations and the incessant, political demands for a more right-wing, uncompromising approach. Anglo-

Jewry desperately needs a tolerant, liberally-minded, compassionate orthodox rabbinate deeply rooted in modern skills and study as well as traditional learning. Will Rabbi Sacks be permitted to produce such men at Jews College and will he find sufficient recruits?

Jonathan Magonet faces a different problem. That of scarcity of material resources. The Leo Baeck College has been run on a shoe string for years but is now in the midst of an extreme financial crisis. Magonet takes over the helm at a time not when the survival of the College is at stake but rather at a time when its breadth and independence hang in the balance. The College's lamentable failures at fund raising mean that other organisations will have to bail it out. It would be disastrous if financial stringencies were then to cloud the original vision of its Reform (and later Liberal) founders of a College devoted to scholarship and serving the whole of Europe and beyond. The range and depth of the Leo Baeck College must not be emasculated. The Progressive Movement no less than the United Synagogue, needs rabbis of scholarship, insight and maturity. It takes time and space to train such people.

Both Jonathans are highly talented, deeply religious individuals. Both are quite capable of providing the rabbis Anglo-Jewry needs.

Anglo-Jewry must now allow them to get on with the job, and give them both the resources and the elbow room to do what is needed. ■

SOME YEARS AFTER THE end of the war, about the same time that Elie Wiesel published his book *Night* and I *Night of the Mist*, we had a discussion on BBC radio. We both received good reviews and were launched as writers.

What the debate was about can be put in a nut-shell. Elie felt he had a mission to put the Holocaust once and for all in the centre of his life, whilst I felt that I ought to move on, towards the future and mankind. We both had the same experiences. We were both in the same camps, both of us came from very observant orthodox backgrounds. And yet we went very different ways.

I have always felt, since that sun-soaked day on the 8th May 1945 when my freedom began, that our Jewish tragedy is not limited to us but that it was and still is a catastrophe of and for Mankind. If we, those of us who survived the camps, limit ourselves to grieving only over our tragedy, harbouring a continuous depression or anger then we will not do justice to the magnitude of the tragedy and will fail even to try to turn it into a healing experience. That the past must be recorded, taught, spoken about and never be forgotten goes without saying. This is and has been our heritage both before and since Auschwitz. We have survived two thousand years of persecution not simply because we remembered the rise and fall of our persecutors but because subsequently we *tried* to make sense of what happened to us and turn the negatives into something positive. The many outstanding intellects of our faith and people used the past as a reservoir of great wealth and what was a poisoned well yesterday became a magical elixir for today and for tomorrow.

We have now reached the historical threshold where we have to speak not only of the pain of yesterday but of the lessons for tomorrow. Any sensible psychologist knows that to remain beyond a reasonable time in a state of depression and anger is sick and self-destructive. Many individuals start new lives after such reactive depressions. Forty years is a reasonable time to elapse before beginning to evaluate what positive messages emerge from the Holocaust, lessons not only ap-

FORTY YEARS ON

'MY
MEMORIES
ARE ALIVE
BUT MY
HATE
HAS GONE'

Eugene Heimler

plicable to us as Jews but to all Mankind. Whether we like it or not, whether we recognise it or not, for good or evil, we are part of the human race. While we have suffered particularly from two thousand years of living within Christian society, we now have experiences to offer the Christian world by demonstrating the lessons of the Holocaust.

We who survived must certainly look after our own because we still live in a hostile world. But beyond the hostility of the world there is a crisis of faith and religion. A world in which there is still persecution of our people in the Soviet Union, a world in which there is still genocide in Cambodia and death by neglect in Ethiopia, the Sudan and many parts of the Third World is a massive indictment! The lessons of Auschwitz

and the Holocaust burn the fingers of those who survived and the fingers of their descendants as an imperative. We can only find our own fulfillment as Jews in a just and sane world. Therefore we must do whatever we can through the pen, through our science, our brains and our wealth to help to create a world of justice. If we fail now, forty years on, to take the opportunity, fail to soak into us the words of the *Torah* and its vision of society, then it will not be the Auschwitz experience that will have destroyed us but the fact that we have not been able to overcome our pain and have abandoned humanity.

This was more or less the argument between me and Elie Wiesel and it is still. What we need is not a symbol of the Holocaust, a prophet who speaks to no-one else except to the past. We do not need symbols. The reality of our six million dead speaks louder than any man can or will.

Should the President of the United States visit Nazi war graves?

No, he should not! But there is a more important issue that emerges from this episode. Chancellor Kohl, the democratically elected representative of the Federal Republic of Germany *insisted* that President Reagan should. He insisted in the name of reconciliation. How can anyone insist? What kind of mentality is it that demands reconciliation with a bunch of sadistic murderers?

Reconciliation 'forty years after' cannot come about by force. It can only come about as a result of proof that the new Germany moves in a totally different orbit from the old Germany. Maintaining contact: yes. Allowing the debate to evolve: yes. Friendship with a new generation: yes. But reconciliation: no.

I have had to make a long journey to reconcile myself to the truth that all Germans are not my enemy. In my book *A Link in the Chain* I described a journey from Paris to Milan in a night-sleeper which I had to share with a young German. Actually I was going to talk to the youth section of the Reform Synagogues of Great Britain and many of its present leaders were members of the youth section then. When we arrived in Milan the German boy asked me whether he could join me for breakfast and I agreed. The



train was racing across Northern Italy. The sun was shining and the sky was cloudless. Everything seemed unreal and perfectly beautiful. How could I sit there with a German? How could I speak as if there was not a world between us?

'You don't say very much. Did they hurt you a lot?'

I nodded.

'I can see, it is even difficult for you to speak to me. But this insanity must stop somewhere'.

At last I found words to reply.

'I know, it is insane and I am truly sorry. But you must realise that in you I see reflected everything that happened to me, although I know that you are not responsible. I would like to forgive you, but how can I? How can I forget what happened to my father, my sister, my aunts, uncles, nephews, and cousins and my six million comrades who were destroyed? I want to forgive you, yet something stops me. And yet I believe that you and I are both victims of some terrible mistake'.

It was this hate that I had to overcome. Some years later, when I had been able to deal with my hate, I might have been able to reach out to this young German.

Today my memories are very much alive still but my hate has gone. I have been to West Germany and taught there. I made a few friends there but none of my own generation. With them I remained sceptical, doubtful and suspicious. I tried to convey in my teaching the truth that all those who are in pain are closed into an invisible concentration camp, that there is more than enough pain in our world, out there, where we are living, to give us a deep sense of our own personal Auschwitz. Our own minds, because we are human, can be both the persecutor and the persecuted.

I tried to teach them what Judaism has meant to me and that what I am teaching, in scientific form as social functioning, today has its roots in our sacred literature. Others coin from the Greek or the Latin. My coinage comes from Hebrew and I was moved to hear my students speaking about the *Ruah* — spirit — or about *Yezer Harah* — the evil inclination — or *Yezer Tov* — the good inclination.

I have felt the absolute necessity not simply to talk about the Holocaust but rather to *do*. I con-

sider one of my most important achievements, apart from my books and professional work, was helping to establish a Jewish community in Harlow New Town. The Jewish communities in Europe had been destroyed. My own community, too. Eight years after the end of the war I went to Harlow regularly every week to lead services, to teach the children and to conduct the High Holy Day Services. To put down new roots in place of the old, torn ones and to start all over again emotionally was a very healing experience.

When I was very young I wanted to be a rabbi like the soft spoken Rabbi Maier-Benedict. He appealed to my childish sensibilities because he was a good man and my mother called him a saint. 'Saint Maier-Benedict' was so good that when he was around none of us children dared to be naughty. We just sat there literally at his feet and I suppose it helped a great deal that we often did not understand a single word of what he said. Yet the teacher I had become in Harlow did not command the total respect of the children, no mother would have told her child that 'Rabbi Heimler is a saint'. The only thing I had in common with our revered *Tzadik* was that because of my newly acquired English accent many could not understand me either ...

Forty years after, when I take stock, I see clearly how much the *-doing* has been part of my life and how little I had actually talked about what I was doing. And if I reflect: talking about the past *only* belongs to the past whilst doing something about the present belongs to the future. Elie Wiesel may be needed to remind us of the past and I may be needed to remind us of the future. Forty years hence when we both will be a memory, in two thousand and twenty five, what is now past and what is now future will have merged into one. ■

Professor Eugene Heimler was born in Hungary in 1922. In his early twenties he was deported to Auschwitz where his first wife died. After the war John Heimler came to England and studied psychiatric social work before establishing his own unique method — *Social Functioning*. A chair was created for him at the University of Calgary and he has his own Heimler Foundation in Britain. His books include *Night of the Mist* and *A Link In The Chain*.

I WAS HONoured TO HAVE the opportunity of speaking at a meeting of the Manor House Centre for Judaism and to have the opportunity of listening to 'A Jewish View of Ecology'.

This is the essence of what I said and what I learned.

We live in a fantastic world.

Nobody on earth *need* go cold or hungry.

Nobody on earth *need* die in pain.

We can fly twice as fast as the sound of music.

We are healthier and living longer.

We can climb to the top of the highest mountain.

We can plumb the depths of the deepest sea.

We put a man on the moon, and our machines have flown close to other planets. Everybody on earth can through the medium of television, radio and the printed word, employ the best of literature, music, drama, art and custom.

At the flick of a switch, nation can speak peace unto nation.

FANTASTIC! — BUT:-

1) One third of the world's human population lives under the constant threat of malnutrition.

2) 28 children under the age of 5 die from conditions relating to malnutrition and environmental pollution every minute of the day.

3) One third of the world's arable land surface is at risk of becoming a desert because of human misuse.

4) The world is losing 70 hectares of natural and semi-natural vegetation every minute of every day, and is only replanting 7, and most of that replanting is with exotic softwood and Eucalyptus monoculture. By the year 2025, good hardwood timber will be a very rare and hence a very valuable commodity.

5) On average, every acre of the world is losing 8 tonnes of living soil a day, the maximum natural rate of replenishment (soil formation) is estimated at no more than 5 tonnes per acre per year.

6) World fisheries have declined since they peaked in 1970.

7) WORLD AGRICULTURE IS IN A MESS. We depend on only 8 megacrops, BARLEY, MAIZE, MILLET, OATS, RICE, RYE, SORGHUM AND WHEAT, all of which are now so genetically uniform that catastrophe in the form of disease could strike at any season wiping out a vast proportion

A Million Living Things Are Doomed, But...



WE CAN CREATE A GARDEN OF EDEN ON PLANET EARTH

David Bellamy

of the annual crop. The same applies to the grasses of the improved leys which now feed our cattle and sheep, natural diversity is all the time giving way to planned uniformity.

8) The cost of raising and distributing those crops in terms of energy used (which costs money) investments required (which costs money) set against energy (saleable food) produced (which makes money for the farmer) increases year by year as does the cost of the energy (fossil fuel) on which farming success has depended since horse sweat gave way to horse power.

9) Despite collectivization, harvests in both Russia and China and many other countries have been poor in recent years. The shortfall in production has been made up mainly by purchases from America and Canada.

10) The North American Food Machine, the ultimate (so far) in productivity is now becoming less and less economic in real terms. So much so, that many farmers are turning away from food production to cash in on crops like rape-seed and sunflower for 'healthful' unsaturated oil production. To meet the fluctuating world demands other cereal farmers are opening up new hectares and farming their older acreages with greater intensity. The end result, in 1977 the Soil Conservation Service reported the loss of 2 BILLION tonnes of all American soil to Sheet and Rill erosion, 450 million tonnes to gully erosion and even more yet unestimated to streamside and roadside erosion. With record losses measured at between 50 and 100 tonnes per acre in the Palouse area of Washington, Oregon and Idaho (some of the richest agricultural soils in the world) and most extensive losses in the critically important corn belt, with average losses in Iowa of 9.9, Illinois of 6.7 and Missouri 10.7 tonnes per acre per annum, the future does not look too good either for the farmers or for a hungry world.

11) The coal, oil and natural gas which has fuelled the past 250 years of people success, were laid down over a period of no less than 300 million years. It is estimated that we have already consumed more than a half of the total reserves and that which remains is in the less accessible areas and therefore more and

more precious energy will be required to develop their potential.

Furthermore, atomic power has not proved to be the safe source of cheap, unlimited energy it was once thought to be. Already there is growing public concern over its future.

12) Acid rain, which is at least in part a result of using those fossil fuels is corroding our ancient monuments and buildings and speeding the tendencies towards acidification which is a natural background process of the maturation of any well watered landscape.

Are these signs of success? No, they are the signals of abject failure just around the corner.

If it is any consolation, we have done nothing which, given the same attributes and opportunities, any other organism would have done. We have been **DRAMATICALLY** successful in **OBEYING THE LAWS OF NATURE**, in exploiting the resources of the earth, we have annexed more territory, used more mineral nutrients and degraded more energy than any other single species. If we continue, we will go out in a blaze of self inflicted glory.

However, there is one paramount difference, we are not like the other organisms, we are set aside from all the other products of creative evolution by the power of conscious thought. We alone can strive to understand the laws of nature, we alone can record, review and understand history both natural and man-made, and we alone can plan for a long term future.

Civilization was made possible only through the advances of the agricultural and industrial revolutions. With more time at their disposal people began to understand that the laws of nature make the world a lousy place in which to live and that to improve the lot of the average person laws of ethical conduct (thou shalt not kill, covert, bear false witness etc. etc.) were required and what is more had to be seen to be enforced.

It has been the existence of these laws which have become the cornerstones of this thing called civilization.

Civilization alone has striven to make the world a less lousy place in which people can enjoy life. Civilization, agriculture and industry together in a perfect world providing a fair slice of an ever

larger cake for all members of the community of humankind.

The civilizing influence with its religions, schools, hospitals, welfare states, treaties, conventions, pacts and figures has played a key role in the story of human success. Civilization does however now have a new role to play in this time of global crisis.

We can take the non-civilized way out and continue to turn the world into the drab, dull, viscious place it is rapidly becoming in which the vast majority of people have no hope for a visible civilized future, whilst a few greedily hold on to the MEGABUCKS they make from what they still regard as positive development and progress. Or we can start to create a garden of Eden, a truly civilized world of great beauty with a population properly planned, a population of all colours, creeds and kinds, well fed and well cared for both in physical and mental and spiritual terms, a place in which the human mind and body relieved of the necessity of harsh repetitive work has time to strive towards new perfection, new heights of understanding, reaching for the moon and far beyond. People the masters, not the slaves of their machines, now the architects of their own future.

The main constraint against this ever happening is that it can only be accomplished by wise use of all resources and that includes the genetic diversity of this earth. For once we have squandered all the fossil fuels as a source of energy rather than as a resource for making chemicals and plastics on which our lifestyle now depends, our only alternative and thus hope for the future lies in biological and genetic engineering and tissue culture. Yes, in the not too distant future there will be no need to subject animals to the inhumanities of factory farming and slaughter. Much of our needs both for a variety of foods and more importantly organic chemicals will come from mass tissue and cell culture. This could well take place in the hotter drier areas of the world, making full use of the energy of the sun in areas which are now considered to be man made deserts. Thus vast tracts of the better watered, more temperate regions of the earth could go back from intensive agriculture to other 'softer' uses.

However, it is true to say that both the genetic and bio-engineer need genetic diversity on which to act, and that genetic resource is there, within the diversity of our flora and fauna. Unique information, a genetic heritage of importance to all our pasts and now to all our futures.

All the time new living organisms are being discovered which have important properties which are being put to use in our industries.

Say the ecosystems which had supported them had been destroyed before science had investigated their presence and potential value. The really frightening thing is that the vast bulk of the ecosystems we are destroying including those 70 hectares of natural and semi-natural vegetation every minute have not been studied in any depth at all. Much of the wood goes into the chipper or pulp machine unclassified, so what about all the unknown plants and animals whose very existence depended on the forest, we will never know what we have lost, let alone what potential we could have developed in the future.

I am often asked what is the rarest plant on earth. My answer is always the same. The one we haven't discovered yet and which is about to become extinct. It is no good either just thinking that all we need to do is keep one or two alive museum pieces in zoos and botanic gardens. The only hope for the future lies in the genetic diversity of large populations.

Take as a prime example the current plight of the Whales of the World. Much scientific evidence indicates that they are extremely intelligent organisms. They make love, enjoy family life and social organisation, they communicate, teach their children, some even sing long and complex songs. They also live complex lives much in the same way as we do and along with many others I believe that they share with us humans some of the powers of conscious thought. Despite this new found knowledge, they are regarded by some as a mere resource to be harvested in the most efficient way possible, with no compassion, to their intelligence or the pain and anguish they and their families suffer. Yet human greed and stupidity sinks even further for even if we can forget the ethics of what we are do-

ing and simply regard them as a valuable resource, we should surely realise that they should be conserved. Yet Japan and Russia and a few lesser whaling nations continue to demand more and more, hastening their extinction.

This is not only inhumanity, but total insanity. Resourcecide with malice aforethought.

If the thinking world cannot make cultured educated people care for such a resource, especially when there are such vital questions of ethics at stake, how can we hope that they will listen to similar arguments to protect genetic resources, the existence of which we have no proof.

The answer is that we must for the future of civilization now depends on the success of those arguments which will conserve the genetic resources now lodged in the areas of wilderness that are still left. These and these alone, hold our only hope for a sustainable future, the natural resources of our future, hope for health and wealth for everyone.

Yet we know that mainly because of habitat destruction, the world is losing one species of plant or animal a day. Diverse populations are being wiped out at an ever increasing rate, by the end of the century one will be disappearing every hour, and we will be able to ring the year 2000 in unsafe in the knowledge that the success of 'HUMANKIND' has to this auspicious date doomed one million sorts of living things to extinction. A quarter of the earth's living diversity will be gone, and we will soon find that it is too heavy a price to pay.

HOMO SAPIENS our pioneer days are over, the piteous scraps of wilderness which do remain, are no longer a threat to our well-being, they are the only hope we have, our investment for a future.

Unless we begin to legislate for, administer and engineer the new sustainable future of a green growing world right now, ideology will fight ideology for the meagre non-renewable resources that do remain and the world will edge closer to the holocaust we all fear.

The exciting thing is that out of this realisation has come a new force in society called conservation, the only movement in the social evolution of people which can gain them future survival. At first it was a series of disparate voices calling out

of the junk heaps of urban sprawl and third world concern. Now it is a global movement of informed people, the latest recommendations of which are embodied in a series of internationally agreed and sponsored recommendations, called **THE WORLD CONSERVATION STRATEGY**.

The ethics of which:-

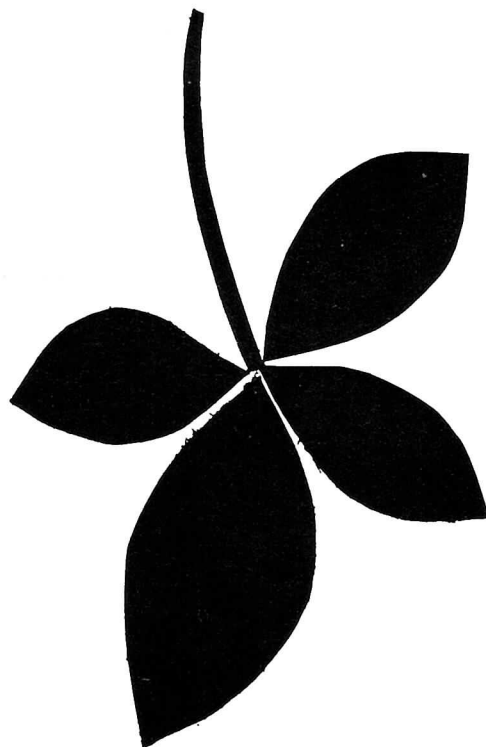
- maintenance of essential ecological processes and life support systems

- preservation of genetic diversity
- sustainable utilization of species must be put into immediate effect.

It was indeed a sobering thing to learn that the early writings of the Jewish people encompass all the basic recommendations of the World Conservation Strategy.

If only the world's religious leaders would come together in this new faith, and translate the real meaning of dominion into positive action for the good of the whole of God's creation. ■

David Bellamy Britain's best known ecologist, is 52, married and has five children. He was trained as a botanist, and taught botany at the University of Durham until 1980. The best known among the nine TV series he has made so far was *Botanic Man*, among the most recent was *Bellamy's New World*. Among his publications are *The Mouse Book* and *The Queen's Hidden Garden*.



The Message Of Torah: Replenish The Earth

Andrew Goldstein

CONCERN FOR ECOLOGY is relatively modern, coming out of a realisation of the great damage done to nature by the Industrial Age. As such it seems unlikely that we can find texts from the bible and rabbinic literature to give foundation to 'a Jewish view of ecology'.

And yet, if we accept a definition of ecology as 'a branch of science concerned with the inter-relationship of organisms and their environment', then a number of texts come readily to mind.

The magnificent Psalm 104 is based on the notion of the planned inter-relationship between the environment and animals, all proof of the Creator's ingenuity:

'You make springs gush forth
in the valleys
They give drink to every
beast of the field

The trees of the land are
watered abundantly
The cedars of Lebanon which
He planted
In them the birds build their
nests ...'

So God created a perfect world: 'And God saw everything that He had made and it was very good' (Gen 1:31). Humankind were given their place in this system: 'And God blessed them and said to them: be fruitful and multiply. And *replenish the earth* and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over ...' (Gen 1:28). Our glory is to have dominion over all other living things on earth: our challenge is 'to replenish it'. What clearer call could there be to conservation. A Midrash portrays God taking Adam around the Garden of Eden showing him its great beauty and saying 'See how lovely and how worthy of praise are My works. They have been created for your sake: take care not to spoil or destroy My world'. (Midrash Eccl. Rabbah 7:13)

From the *halachic* point of view, the vital verses are Deuteronomy 20:19-20:-

'When you besiege a city
many days ... you shall
not destroy the trees thereof
by swinging an axe
against them, for from them
you may eat but not
destroy them ...'

From this passage which prohibits the chopping down of fruit trees using an axe in the extreme condition of war all sorts of conclusions were drawn by the rabbis of old. First of all it was argued that if God forbade the chopping down of fruit trees in the emergency of war, how much more so in peaceful times. Then, that destructive agencies other than an axe were likewise prohibited, e.g. by diverting a water source from the trees.

The Hebrew for 'shall not destroy' in the Deuteronomy verse is *Bal Tashchit*, and the concept of *Bal Tashchit* was applied to 'all things' (Baba Kama 916b), 'food' (Shabbat 140b), 'clothing' (Kiddushin 32a), 'furniture' (Shabbat 129a), 'water' (Yevamot 11b) — viz 'A man should not pour the water out of his cistern (presumably to clean it) while others might require it.'

Maimonides summarised the rabbinic view: 'It is not only forbidden to destroy fruit bearing trees but whoever breaks vessels, tears clothes, demolishes a building, stops up a fountain, or wastes food in a *destructive manner* offends against the law of *bal tashchit*'. (*Hilchot Melachim* 8:10) It should be noted

that it says 'in a destructive manner' for the Talmud had clearly recorded that 'if a fruit bearing tree causes damage to the other trees, or the value of the wood for fuel is greater than the value of the fruit it produces, it may be cut down' (*Baba Kama* 91b-92a). So one had to be reasonable. The time comes when some trees grow old and it would make far more sense to replace them than to leave them gradually to wither.

So far an insight into a Jewish view on the destruction of nature. What about direct conservation of the environment. Here, too, it is possible to quote many passages from rabbinic literature to show that the individuals who made them, at least had a sense of the practical steps needed to conserve natural resources. My favourite is: 'You should not burn a naphtha lamp too quickly, as it wastes a valuable commodity' (*Shabbat* 68b). And there is the law forbidding needlessly to waste animal life. Hence there is a prohibition on hunting where one kills for sport, not for eating (*Hullin* 7b).

One could also quote many texts that show an appreciation of the problems an urban society imposes in the field of waste disposal. The key here is Deuteronomy 23:13-15 which talks about the siting of latrines outside a military camp. As with the *bal tashchit* verse above, this one is also extended in the Talmud. Thus we learn that dungheaps or garbage piles were not allowed within the city limits because of vermin (*Baba Kama* 82b) and a threshing floor was prohibited within 50 cubits of the city limits lest chaff carried by the wind affects the health of the city dwellers (*Baba Kama* 24b-25a). We hear that no furnaces were allowed in Jerusalem because of the fumes (*Baba Kama* 82b) — though I reckon that the Temple sacrifices must have caused quite a bit of pollution. And I like the recollection that pious men bury broken glassware deep in their own fields and prohibit its scattering over public places (*Baba Kama* 30a).

One could go on quoting interesting snippets from rabbinic literature that all could be said to have striking modern equivalents. As I said at the beginning, it is a bit anachronistic to claim that the bible or rabbinic literature had a view on ecology, but it is clear to me that

continued on next page



I WAS RECENTLY ASKED TO choose a religious virtue. The one I plumped for was not piety but generosity, because without generosity of spirit I don't believe in any of the rest. If you go through all the right motions, alternatively buttering up or bribing the Almighty, the result can seem very much like religion, but the test is generosity.

It doesn't matter what formula you use in prayer, liberal, orthodox or reform. The question is, do your prayers make you big or small, generous or mean. If they make you smaller or meaner, I suggest you look again at your brand of religion — perhaps you should trade it in for another, for its doing you no good.

There are many ways to pervert religion and the perversion of religion is a speciality of the affluent West. But it is worthwhile also to examine our own ways of neutralising the religious message. The methods are so simple and innocent looking, that sometimes we do not see how deadly they are.

One trick goes like this. There is always a difficulty in speaking to God, because He, or She, is infinite and we are finite. Therefore the distance between us is so enormous that it seems impossible to bridge the gap. There are two ways round

it. One is legitimate. Using this way, we try to grow towards God, become bigger ourselves, more God-size. We try to be kinder, to have more patience, to do more than strict duty or even commonsense requires. In other words we make ourselves more generous and more loving. There is another way, the cheat's way with religion.

Using this way, we do not make ourselves bigger to bridge the gap, but try to make God smaller instead. We do not try to change ourselves, because that is too demanding. We try to change the nature of religion, to distort it for our own purposes. Then God just becomes the extension of our own prejudices. We deify our own limitations, and make our meanness cosmic.

This is a common device in all religious fanaticism, when nobody is willing to listen, but everyone is willing to pronounce. It is easy on religious committees to get so absorbed by the small print, that the great print of 'generosity' is lost. The small print, however clever it is, then only becomes the funeral rite of a real religion.

I have met many 'religious' people in the course of my life. A very few were genuine, quite a few were phony, and most, including me, were a mixture of both.

How did I distinguish the true and the false? Ideology isn't much use for such a basic question. The only touchstone was their generosity. ■

Rabbi Lionel Blue is convenor of the Bet Din of the Reform Synagogues of Great Britain. He is undoubtedly better known to the general public as a writer and broadcaster. His renowned 'Thoughts for the Day' have recently appeared in a book 'Bright Blue' currently in the Best Sellers list.

continued from previous page

there is more than sufficient evidence to show that there was often a keen awareness of the biblical charge to us that we must *replenish* the earth, not just use our dominion over it for our own selfish pleasure.

Let the Midrash have the last word — where it pictures the raven rebuking Noah: 'You hate me, for you did not choose to send a scout from the kinds of which there were 7 pairs, but from a species of which

there was only one pair. If the power of the sun or the power of the cold had been too much for me, would not the world have been missing a species?' (*Sanhedrin* 108b). ■

Rabbi Andrew Goldstein was born in Warwick in 1943 and brought up in Birmingham. A graduate in botany, he wrote his rabbinic thesis on the subject of the four species associated with Succot. A brilliant educationalist, Rabbi Goldstein has served Northwood and Pinner Liberal Synagogue since receiving semicha from Leo Baeck College in 1970.

ARE WE EATING LIONEL ALIVE?

Gerald Priestland

Bright Blue — Rabbi Lionel Blue's Thoughts for the Day. BBC, £2.50, 1985, 94pp.

'THOUGHT FOR THE Day' is a perennial problem for the BBC. Tradition still demands that some morally uplifting sentiment be affixed to the doorpost of the day, if only as a gesture to anxious members of the Central Religious Advisory Committee. But when you are competing for attention with Roland Rat and Page Three Girls you can no longer get away with the explicit sermonette of yesteryear. Most of your listeners just do not speak the religious language, and those who do tend to be fluent in only one particular dialect and resentful of any other.

So piety is confined to the early morning 'Prayer for the Day' — when scarcely anybody is listening. But 'Thought' at a quarter to eight is expected to behave like one of those modern parsons who dress in tweed jacket, cord trousers, collar and tie, and pop into the pub to chat about football, slipping in the occasional crafty one about God showing us the yellow card.

Even then, it's an awkward art-form. Amongst the pessimism of the bad news and worse weather forecasts, 'Thought' stands out like



a healthy thumb in a sore hand. Some *Today* programme editors hate it, regarding it as an unwelcome distraction from their parade of disasters. In the days when it was played in from a tape recording, you could almost hear the studio presenter switching off mentally and reaching for his coffee cup. It is not an easy item to integrate into the flow of *Today*.

To some degree this has been overcome by insisting that the 'thinkers' come into the studio and do it live. Myself, I am not at my best before about ten o'clock; but coming in live does give you the chance to work in a topical allusion. It also enables the presenters to greet you and toss in a bit of chat or a question or two — *if* the producer hasn't bungled his arithmetic and is not shoving the thing along to catch the news in time. Thinkers-for-the-day are often distracted by mysterious exchanges of waves and shrugs through the control-room window. Still, it is nice to be treated like one of the family. Brian Redhead is particularly good at this, and it does make for a much better transition. You can always tell when the 'thinker' is making a hit with Redhead, and the chances are that if the presenter can show he is really listening, the audience will too.

There is absolutely no doubt who the presenters' current favourite is: your own, your very own RABBI LIONEL BLUE! Let's hear a big hand for him, for there is no doubt he is the listeners' darling, too. Goodness knows if he has a separate effect on Jewish members of the audience — for all I know, they cringe at the sound of him. But the rest of us sigh and think 'Only a rabbi could combine story-telling and spiritual uplift like that ...'

Of course it is not so simple; though I could name a squad of four or five rabbis whom I would be glad to see taking over the entire religious output of the BBC and probably producing a religious revival as the result. Lionel Blue is one of them, but he is also something special. For one thing, he is acutely sensitive to his Christian, or semi-Christian listeners, though without any strain showing. For another, he is appealingly frank about himself and his weaknesses — the addiction to food, the nervous breakdowns, the attempted suicide and the rest of it. Vulnerable is the word, I suppose.

Of course he is convulsingly funny. Among other things, *Bright Blue* is an anthology of Jewish jokes. And not least, he is a superb performer of his own scripts. In

view of that, it is amazing how well most of them read in print, though it helps if you can 'hear' Lionel's voice as you read. But it does mean that a few pieces, like the one with bird-noises about the Holy Spirit, are a bit mystifying on the page.

But we cannot have Blue Thoughts for ever — even Blue can't have them, for they are an extremely demanding form of expression. Just think of having to sit down, day after day, and command your imagination to come up with a Significant Thought! This is one of the perils of really good broadcasting: not only does it show up the run-of-the-mill stuff as mediocre, but unless carefully husbanded it burns up its own reserves. One cannot give out three or four minutes of wisdom unless one has taken in a lifetime of experience and relived its most painful moments over and over again. I only hope this has done Lionel Blue good. It would be terrible if we had just eaten him alive for our pleasure. ■

Gerald Priestland is one of radio's most familiar and distinguished voices. Formerly BBC Religious Affairs correspondent, he now devotes himself to writing and freelance broadcasting. Priestland has done perhaps more than anyone to raise the level and image of religious broadcasting in Britain.



SPEAKING AT THE 1983 convention of the Zionist Federation of Great Britain and Ireland, Professor Anita Shapira of Tel Aviv University made the point that Zionism was born out of the Jews' simultaneous encounter with modernity and anti-semitism.

'The vaguely articulated notions of Jewish nationalism', she said 'became significant and potent when the integration of the Jews into the modern world clashed head-on with the spectre of anti-semitism.' She also said that for the Jew at the turn of the century, 'a secular Jewish nationalism could be his answer to the secular nationalism which refused him entrance.' And she quoted with approval Yehezkel Kaufmann's dictum that 'Zionism was not born out of the fear of assimilation but out of the recognition that assimilation was impossible.'

A second characteristic of the early stages of modern Zionism, according to Professor Shapira, was its revolutionary nature. Speaking of the men and women of the Second Aliyah, she said that 'their road to the modern world led through a belief in revolution, in socialism, in the remaking of society, the brotherhood of man, internationalism and utopian schemes.'

Reviewing the history of Zionism, Professor Shapira concluded with this question: 'In which direction is Zionism moving today and what is

the role which Zionism in the West can play in determining this direction?' To answer this question is to formulate Zionist ideology today.

To start with, let us bear in mind that Zionist ideology today is being formulated in conditions quite different from those that characterised its emergence. For Jews today can, especially in the West, assimilate without too many obstacles. The anti-semitism that inhibited earlier generations of 'emancipated' Jews from integrating into Western society is much less potent today. The principal manifestation of what remains is anti-Zionism, which suggests to some Jews that distancing oneself from Zionism improves one's chances to assimilate.

All this means that we cannot persuade our contemporaries to embrace Zionism in order to express themselves as modern, emancipated, secular men and women. They can do so in other ways. Affirmation of Zionism is today a firm statement against assimilation.

Similarly, we are not in a position to fuse our children's revolutionary zeal, such as it is, with commitment to Zionism. Even if revolution means to them what it meant to the *chalutzim* of the Second Aliyah, it can no longer express itself in Zionism. For today, Zionism is perceived as particularist, élitist, bourgeois, even imperialist. Many of our children want nothing to do with it and — possibly because they

are tainted by a touch of Jewish self-hatred — they give their support to the opponents of Zionism. To them, alas, Zionism spells more often oppression than revolution.

Those who today see themselves as Zionists do so not because they want to assimilate but can't, and not because they want to change the world — for assimilation is easier without Zionism and revolution more accepted when expressed in anti-Zionist terms — but because they are committed to *Judaism*. And Judaism today is not really possible without Zionism. Out of the despair to which Western civilization has brought many of us, and because of our disappointment with revolution, some of us have turned to our religious roots and found Zionism in them. When we wanted more of Judaism than we were given, we turned to Zionism and found our people through it.

Zionist affiliation comes to us nowadays, literally, with our Synagogue subscription. Whereas membership of Diaspora Zionist political parties is on the decline — they have to forge their membership records to retain their representation at congress — membership of religious Zionist bodies is on the increase.

Zionism for most of us ceased to be a secular-revolutionary force and has become a religious-bourgeois manifestation, no longer necessarily negating our diaspora existence. We

New Directions For Zionism

TRANSFORMED JUDAISM

Dow Marmur

must acknowledge this reality and actively pursue a policy of education and information in an updated version of the Zionist vision of an Achad Ha'am and a Martin Buber. The political response that led to the creation of the State of Israel in the Land of Israel has now made it possible to offer a spiritual-cultural framework for the renewal of the People of Israel and the Faith of Israel. What follows is an attempt to formulate this old-new Zionism.

The achievement of Zionism, i.e. the establishment of the Jewish State, completed the triangle that is Israel. Until that time, and for most of its history, Israel has been Faith and Israel has been People. Israel as Land was a dream which permeated both Faith and People, but it was only a dream. The reality of the Land completed the triad and changed the nature of all three; it made Israel whole, and it made it different. Jewish thought is wrestling with the implications of the change: how the Faith of Israel and the People of Israel have been transformed by the possession of the Land of Israel. Judaism has entered a new phase. It is no longer only suspended from Heaven but also rooted in the soil. As a result, every conscious Jew has become something of a Zionist, and every Zionist and supporter of the Land of Israel has become involved with the People and the Faith. The distinction between religionists and

secularists has disappeared, despite the institutions that suggest the contrary.

The completion of the triad Israel as Faith, People *and* Land gave rise to a new triad. The existence of the Land brought a new dimension of Hope in the perception of the People of Israel in relation to the Faith of Israel. Similarly, the new situation made the People relate to the Land in terms of a new category: Power. And, finally, the relationship of the Faith to the Land — bearing in mind both the Hope and the Power — expresses itself in a new struggle for Justice. Therefore, if Faith-People-Land form one triangle, Hope-Power-Justice form the other.

Since Hope is the outcome of the encounter of Faith and People, Power of People and Land and Justice of Faith and Land, this second triangle forms, together with the first, the Magen David.

FAITH	PEOPLE	LAND
HOPE	JUSTICE	POWER

As Gershom Scholem has shown in his writings it was Zionism that gave the Magen David new vitality and new meaning. It may, therefore, be appropriate to plagiarize Franz Rosenzweig's 'Star of Redemption' and describe the prospect of deliverance in our time that Zionism constitutes with the same

symbol. Rosenzweig's interconnecting triangles are grounded in philosophy; those that Zionism created have their roots in history; both have profound theological implications.

The emergence of Zionism and the establishment of the State of Israel have transformed Judaism in all its aspects. Therefore, it is no longer enough to speak of the *centrality* of Israel. If there were such a term, we should rather speak of the 'Israelness' of Judaism, epitomized in this illustration which tries to make the Magen David into a metaphor for contemporary Judaism and Jewishness.

The triumph of Zionism made Judaism whole, yet our task is by no means completed. For the establishment of the State of Israel may have completed the task of Zionism as far as the first triad is concerned — by adding the Land, it has given life to the Faith and the People — but it has not yet tackled the second triad.

Therefore, we now have to ask ourselves: how does the existence of Israel as Faith, People *and* Land affect our understanding of Hope, Power and Justice? ■

To be concluded in the next issue of *Manna*.

Rabbi Dow Marmur is the senior rabbi of the Holy Blossom Temple, Toronto. He was formerly rabbi of the North Western Reform Synagogue, N.W. London. He is author of 'Beyond Survival'.

THERE'S ONE ADVANTAGE to getting sick in Israel. Everyone's a doctor. They're just too busy being chambermaids, or taxi drivers, or literary agents to qualify.

The 12th Jerusalem International Book Fair — its caucus at the imposing *Binyanei Ha'ooma Convention Centre* overlooking the city and next to the Central Bus Station on the Jaffa Road where from midday on *Erev Shabbat* the single deckers return like so many well schooled bees to the hive, its tentacles extending to a reception at the Presidential Residence and the award of the Jerusalem Prize, previously received

by Graham Greene, V. S. Naipaul and Sir Isaiah Berlin, to the charismatic Milan Kundera at the Khan Theatre — seemed like a good idea. Not that I am a publisher for whom the Fair is intended, but anything to do with books, singly or laid out in booths covering 3 kilometres at the Conference Centre proves irresistibly attractive to so-

meone for whom the printed word is both a modest livelihood and a magnificent obsession. For me its indulgence on this occasion could be temptingly combined with both a vacation in a Holyland bedizined by some profligate springtime god with a multicoloured carpet of flowers, and visits to lifelong friends.

The official opening of the Fair by Prime Minister Peres was preceded by registration and the distribution of the yellow and white 'tags' which both sorted the Agents and Publishers from the Management, Personnel, and Sales Staff, and provided identification for the constant comings and goings through the

BACK

IN JERUSALEM

Rosemary Friedman



special side door of the Centre conveniently adjacent to the fleshpots of the Jerusalem Hilton with its 40 suites, including 3 Royal Suites with private sauna. This colour coding, none denoting author — surely the *sine qua non* of the publishing world — presented problems. I settled, somewhat fraudulently for 'Exhibitor'. Having no stand I was, like the ubiquitous minister, without portfolio.

Armed with ticket — Admit One — I presented myself at the appointed time for the opening ceremony to find that the pasteboard slip, despite its promise, admitted nobody. Five hundred people angrily brandishing similar *vade-mecums* seethed on the steps of the Conference Centre suitably and elegantly attired for the occasion. Time passed. The relayed words of the Prime Minister declared open the exhibition, the doors of which were unequivocally and patently still closed. After a suitable interval allowing Prime Minister Peres and the local paparazzi to get a head start in the three kilometre Book National, the doors opened and into the valley of books surged the five hundred. Two hours later those who had survived the course — Abbeville Press Inc. to Zechner and Huthig Verlag, taking the Simon and Shuster and Steimat-zky hurdles on the way — presented themselves in the bowels of the Hilton for welcoming cheese in its every variety and wines from Riesling to Sauvignon, at a gathering presided over by the ebullient Mayor Teddy Kollek.

Warmed by the *khamzin*, which blew relentlessly from the desert, and the *Rosé* glow of Granache from the Carmel cellars, which washed down the seemingly endless offerings of sizzling *bourekas* and mingled with Moroccan cigars, the week, with its receptions, prizegivings, lectures and symposia, proceeded.

Having enjoyed the peripheral delights of the Book Fair, old prints of the works of Maimonides, facsimiles of illuminated handwriting manuscripts from the Vatican library, the Kennicott Bible and the letters of Martin Luther, my first task was to set up a meeting with my Israeli agent who as we had established in previously exchanged letters was to be found in the Agent's Room — 103 according to my catalogue — where one was invited

to take advantage 'of the quiet atmosphere provided in the centre during trade hours'.

A red suited *Dorit* at the Information Desk directed me to the second floor where all the room numbers, I was not surprised to find, began with the numeral 2. Her colleague, one *Dalia*, after a conference of such length I suspected they were resolving the problem of the West Bank, apologised for the misinformation and assured me that the Agent's Room, 103, was certainly located on the third floor. My scepticism was assuaged by both *Dorit* and *Dalia* — each more beautiful and perplexed than the other — from behind the barricades of the Information Desk. Once again I climbed the concrete stairs to find on the 3rd floor — how gullible can you get? — each number beginning with the numeral 3. *Dorit* and *Dalia* were now joined by *Galia* who, asked me, dark eyes liquid, to be good enough to wait. A second conference proclaimed the Agent's Room to be situated, not surprisingly, on the ground floor, behind their very Information Desk in fact, along the corridor. Room 103 turned out, on further inspection, to be the Registration Room which had, not 24 hours previously dispensed the 'tags'. *Nurit* who still had a large supply of them in front of her, knew nothing about agents but offered to ask *Sima*, who was in charge of room 103 but had gone for coffee. On her return *Sima*, whose smile was dazzling, gave her full attention to the problem, confirmed the room number, 103, the legend in the catalogue, 'quiet atmosphere etc.' and assured me that if I would wait for five minutes the mystery of the disappearing agents would be solved. At the end of five minutes — give or take half-an-hour — *Sima* arrived with the news that room 103 was indeed to be the Agent's Room, 'quiet atmosphere etc', but not until the afternoon when registration would be completed. She assured me that *Ziv*, my particular agent, would be there and watched by a smiling *Dorit*, *Dalia* and *Galia* I left for the hotel shuttle and the Israel Museum where the 7th International Art Book Prize was to be presented by Mayor Kollek.

On the bus a well-preserved American couple — she, if melted down, would have been worth her not inconsiderable weight in gold,

he wore pale blue shorts and matching kibbutz hat — wondered where, in this fabled city with its Western Wall, its Mount from which the dead would in the fullness of time be resurrected, its museums, its holy sites, was TWA — American Express they knew — and since they were going 'shopping' asked to be appraised when the bus reached Ben Yehuda Street.

There was an agent in room 103 in the afternoon but not *my* agent. *Ziv* was expected the following day and a message was left that I had called. A symposium in English by the Jewish Publications Society was followed by the dispersing of participants back to the arduous manning of their stalls until 23.00, or to wine and dine in Jerusalem (*Patcha*, *Kishka*, *Tcholent* and *Kneidlach* like Mama used to make at Feferberg's or fresh fish served in a *Homy* (sic) atmosphere at *Elat Haya*).

The following day brought a message from *Ziv* sellotaped to the notice-board in a transformed room 103, 'quiet atmosphere etc', 'Why don't we meet tomorrow at 5.0? Look forward to seeing you, *Ziv*.' Alas, 5 o'clock Wednesday was the Literary Reception at the Montefiore Windmill followed immediately by that of the British Council, after which was the highspot of the week, the presentation of the Jerusalem Prize to Milan Kundera whose themes expressed the Freedom of the Individual in Society. Meanwhile there was still Tuesday to get through. An important address by Lord Weidenfeld on: 'The Future of Literary Exchange: the Decline and Resurrection of International Publishing in the Humanities', session one of 'Editorial Vision in Today's Marketplace: Exploring for New Books', followed by the presentation of the Friends of Jerusalem award to an impressive list of recipients at the Town Hall in the Jaffa Road by — you guessed it — Teddy Kollek. I pinned a note to the board asking *Ziv* to meet me on Thursday morning. This was getting ridiculous.

A punishing day, Wednesday: Session 2 of the symposium 'Bringing New Books to Market', a magical tea in the garden of the Montefiore Windmill — address by Lord Egremont who had travelled all the way from Petworth — the British Council 'do', and the high

spot of the week, Milan Kundera who won the audience with his statement that 'Israel was the true heart of Europe — a heart strangely located outside the body'. He explained why great novels are always a little more intelligent than their authors — because the novelist was always listening to another, supra-personal voice than that of his personal moral conviction — confessed a predilection for Tristram Shandy and declared that 'the spirit of an age cannot be judged exclusively by its ideas, its theoretical concepts, without considering its art, particularly the novel'. With his filmstar looks and accented French, Kundera captivated the house with his homage to Flaubert's discovery of stupidity, his condemnation of kitsch, and his description of the conflict between the novelist and Rabelais' *agelaste* — the man who does not laugh. To great acclaim he received his prize from — Teddy Kollek.

'There was a loud crack from my back and stars of pain before my eyes'

Thursday morning started off well enough. I met Ziv. It had taken four days. No, he hadn't sold my 'Jewish' novels in Israel. There were two subjects anathema to Hebrew publishers: Jews, and the Holocaust! I offered him 'A Loving Mistress' and 'A Second Wife' and he got quite excited.

It was the day for the opening of the new wing of the Israel Museum, Traditions and Heritage, followed by the reception at their official residence given by The President of Israel and Mrs Herzog. There was time for a quick tour of the Old City. On the shuttle, which I took to Jaffa Gate, the well-preserved American couple of earlier in the week, still 'shupping' were just as mystified as to the whereabouts of Ben Yehuda Street. I wondered if after forty years in the wilderness they would have recognised the Promised Land.

When I got back to the hotel the swimming pool — we were still in the grip of the *khamsin* — looked inviting. In the bedroom I bent down to get my bikini from the drawer and there was a loud crack

from my back and stars of pain before my eyes.

The hotel was superb. A bed-board was produced in minutes and installed. Determined to make the Presidential Reception I rang a chiropractor recommended by friends, one Dr. Offebach, who did not make house calls but would see me if I came to him. He silenced my mocking laughter — I could scarcely move — with the suggestion that icepacks on the offending part would cut off the blood supply, thereby deadening the pain, and in two hours I would be able to get into a taxi. Room Service brought a bucket of ice, together with two elegant glasses and some lemon. The housekeeper brought a plastic laundry bag. The laundry bag leaked. I was not only in pain but soaking wet. Amos, the doorman, recommended hot baths which had cured his sister of a similar condition, and instructed the taxi driver, Yoram, to drive 'easy'. In his concern for my suffering Yoram forgot to put the meter on. With gritted teeth, cursing every bump, we made Talpit. Dr. Offebach, like the torturer's apprentice was waiting on the steps. He bounced on my head, impaled me on his table, treated me to a lecture — illustrated by his wallchart — on how I had mistreated my spine with all that unaccustomed swimming, lifting, climbing round the ramparts. My pleas for mercy curtailed the manipulation — 'don't worry if you hear your joints popping!' A second bed was wet, this time with my tears. I thanked Dr. Offebach.

Yoram wanted to take me to the Dead Sea — '30 minutes, easy, easy,' — to sample the 'bleck mud'. I declined the offer faint with pain and in no state to argue over the *chutspadick* 15 dollars he demanded for our outing.

'My pleas for mercy curtailed the manipulation'

The chambermaid, Susannah, who came from Bethlehem and had six children was better than any State Registered Nurse. She demonstrated, with calisthenics, her own aches and pains, and offered 'Moscovon' tablets, by which she swore, for the pain. She told me that she was the breadwinner of the

family and seemed to have a poor opinion of her husband who 'had a few sheep'. The Jews, she said, having established that I was one, were 'good people'. I drifted through pain and drugs. Ziv, on the telephone, suggested traction which had helped his auntie. My trip to Tiberias following the Book Fair looked unlikely. I doubted I was going to get home. I missed the Israel Museum and President's Reception. I doubt if he missed me.

The evening chambermaid, Yehudit, said I could go to Tiberias: 'Is good. Hot springs'. It was as much as I could do to go to the bathroom.

The *khamsin* came to an end as did the Book Fair. The participants departed for Egypt and Eilat, Tel Aviv and Tiberias, while I lay on my board listening to the distant wail of well-used ambulances provided by generous donors in Milwaukee and Hampstead Garden Suburb.

By the day of my flight I could just hobble. I did not relish being strapped into my upright seat like a battery hen.

Amos on the door greeted me like a long lost friend.

'Was good the baths?'

'Was good.'

'Boker Tov,' Yoram the driver said, 'You wan't go the doctor?'

'Airport. You wan't put the meter on?'

'B'Seder'.

We understood each other. Three bombs had exploded that morning, in Jerusalem and Beit Shemesh. The pain in my back, as we bounced over potholes, seemed less important.

Yoram helped me with my case.

'May you soon be 'leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills ...' I doubted if I would ever walk again.

He told me how much was on the meter.

'You come next year Jerusalem?'

I allowed myself a small pun.

'Oh yes,' I said, looking forward to the next Book Fair, 'I'll be back!' ■

Rosemary Friedman was born in London in 1929. A prolific novelist, her earlier work appeared under the name Robert Tibber. Books include 'Rose of Jericho', 'Proofs of Affection' and 'Practice makes Perfect'.

MY FRIEND DAME EDNA Evrage assures me that our native city is, in fact, the apotheosis of the United Kingdom. If they laugh at a joke about some local Australian *minhag* in Melbourne they will do so in Birmingham, Portsmouth and Piccadilly. Whilst I know this to be an empirically true observation neither I nor Dame Edna can really explain why this should be so. Has humour replaced hubris as the imperial dream fades?

Some years ago I foolishly travelled to the Old Country to speak to the students at the Leo Baeck College about four pulpit vacancies that were begging for candidates. The students dutifully sat in their rather cramped and dingy classroom while I described rabbinic congregational conditions in a land where the sun actually does shine and where orange trees blossom in my back garden. The students listened politely enough but in their eyes I read an unspoken question 'Why should I go to Australia?' I haven't done anything wrong!

It is therefore not surprising to find that of the eight progressive rabbis now serving in Australia six were trained in the United States and only one is from England. There is more than a touch of irony in this fact. From her home in Bayswater the Hon. Lily Montagu literally founded Australia's first non-orthodox synagogue. She supplied us with our first prayer books, despatched our first four rabbis and, even though these were the bleakest years of the depression, somehow found the money to supplement their salaries. The sun has set on that admirable sense of Empire. It snapped when Singapore was captured by the Japanese. It sank when the American Fleet rescued Australia from a Japanese invasion.

Now our children are no longer taught the words of 'God Save the Queen' and hardly know the tune. Within the Jewish community this sense of remoteness from our British origins is accentuated by the fact that according to the Australian Commonwealth Census of 1981 less than 10% of Australian Jewry was born in the United Kingdom.

Has everything gone overboard, apart from our tendency to laugh at the same jokes? Well, not quite. Unbelievably Australian Jewry is

Australian Jewry

ORANGE TREES IN THE GARDEN AND A STRATEGY FOR SURVIVAL

JOHN LEVI

still subject to 'pastoral tours' by your own very charming and very shrewd 'Chief Rabbi'. Like Haley's Comet his circuits are greeted with wide public interest. They also create the valuable impression that there is more to Jewish religious life than can be detected in our local orthodox rabbinate.

An even more disconcerting hangover from our colonial past is provided by delegates at the Board of Deputies of British Jews who claim to represent some antipodean congregations. I have no doubt that these ghostly Australian constituents are grateful for the wisdom that is sent to them from London. But why your local delegates to the British Board put up with their anachronistic presence escapes me. And whilst we consider the democratic management of the Jewish community, it may be worth mentioning that in Australia our local Boards manage to function on the agreed principle that Progressive and Orthodox Judaism must be treated on the basis of absolute equality. Only if both sides agree can our Board of Deputies issue any statement or initiate any debate on religious matters.

The Pacific Basin is said to be the most rapidly developing sector of the globe and there are certainly radical changes occurring in this region. In 1984 the tide in the pattern of migration shifted significantly when, for the first time, im-

migrants from Asian countries to Australia outnumbered newcomers from Europe. As Hong Kong's handover date comes closer no one doubts that this process will continue. Within the Jewish community we have successfully integrated significant waves of migration from South Africa and the Soviet Union.

It is estimated that there are now 80,000 Jews in Australia. There are 6,000 Australian Jews who live in Israel and who therefore represent a considerable proportion of our own young people. It is possible at the present, that only Melbourne and Sydney have Jewish communities large enough to constitute the critical mass needed for group survival. For example faced with a dwindling Jewish population, there is no rabbi now serving either an orthodox or a progressive congregation in New Zealand.

The pride and joy of Australian Jewry is undoubtedly our Day School system. With parsimonious aid from the State and thanks to incredible communal fund raising efforts, we believe that 70% of all primary age Jewish children in Melbourne attend a Jewish Day School. In both Melbourne and Sydney the progressive synagogues have built schools and it is not unreasonable to foresee that by 1990 there will be a total enrolment of 1,000 pupils in our two Day Schools. Our other, not so secret, weapon in the battle for Jewish survival is 'Netzer' our Youth Movement. We send every child who shows leadership potential in the Youth Movement to spend a year in Israel after matriculation. After ten years experience the cumulative effect of this programme upon our congregations and its leadership has been profound.

After 55 years, Progressive Judaism in Australia and New Zealand is now more than middle aged. During this time we have managed to grow into a Union of 12 synagogues, a Youth Movement and two day schools. We have about 8,000 adult members without splitting into two or three non-orthodox movements. We kept our hats on and, from the beginning, remained staunchly Zionist. Perhaps because of our isolation, or through simple Aussie pragmatism, we seem to have been spared some of the agonising ideological debates that our English cousins appear to enjoy.

continued on next page

Back to the Sources. Reading the Classic Jewish Texts edited by Barry W. Holtz. Summit Books, New York, 1984.

JEWISH LITERATURE, SUGGESTS one of the contributors to this fine volume, should be seen as a vast inverted pyramid. The Bible is at the base, 'but the edifice expands outward enormously — midrashic literature, the Talmuds, the commentaries, the legal codes, the mystical tradition, the philosophical books'. Throughout all this huge body of writing, one returns again and again to the small corpus of the Bible, all to the *Chumash*. It is there that resides the source of Jewish experience, the source of Jewish teaching. 'Turn it', said the Rabbi, 'and turn it again for everything is in it; and contemplate it and grow grey and old over it and stir not from it'.

What is the secret of the seminal influence of Holy writ? The vivid immediacy and freshness of its speech that enables us to clothe its spare frame in the ever-changing thought of the present? We find the same directness in Homer and the Ugaritic epics. But the world of the Greek heroes and the nature deities of the Mediterranean seaboard provide no moral pattern for later generations. The secret, of course, lies elsewhere. The Bible is a tale of personal revelation, of faith that derives from an inspired sense of justice and integrity.

There are two ancillary dimen-

I confess that I hold the eccentric view that Jews have played a far more significant role in the history of both Australia and New Zealand than has been seen anywhere else in the Diaspora. We have neither an established Church nor a national elitist model of behaviour that incorporates visions of dreaming spires or pious pilgrim fathers. Indeed, in 1930, when the Australian Labour Prime Minister Scullin decided that it was time to install an Australian born Governor General as the King's representative in Canberra's Government House he pointedly chose the eminent jurist Sir Isaac Isaacs. Whitehall was shaken and Buckingham Palace was shocked but the symbolic meaning was clear.

The Australian Jewish ex-

BOOKS

THE SECRET OF THE BIBLE

BEN SEGAL



perience, distant and limited as it may be, indicates that if a community is to survive it is helpful to live in a society in which Jews are allowed to be themselves and where Jews are therefore free to educate their children in Jewish Day Schools. We have learned that our children don't take their heritage seriously if it is 'part time' and our congregants understand that we are not serious about Jewish education when we send our children off to be taught by strangers from Monday to Friday and then, at the weekend, steal from their their precious spare time. We have also learned that our diaspora community depends for its future good health upon the number of our youngsters who have had a sustained experience of modern Israeli society. Whether they ultimately

sions that deepen our understanding of the Bible text — land and language, those rare gifts that are the special inheritance of Israeli Jews. I have been fortunate to share them in a modest degree. I recall how, as a boy on my first visit to Palestine, I watched from the train that wound around the hillsides on the way to Jerusalem. Here, pointed my father, Samson strode across the valley to court the Philistine maiden, there the young David defied the giant in front of the battle array.

We visited Rachel's tomb 'on the way to Ephrath'. We sat outside Hebron and ate figs and drank water in Arab beakers beside the gnarled 'oaks of Mamre' where Abraham had dwelt. Nor is it accidental that two of the architects of the revived Jewish State, Orde Wingate and Yigael Yadin, carried pocket editions of the Bible on their expeditions.

To the dimension of land I was lucky to add also the dimension of language. For one cannot relish the full savour of the Bible, its subtle nuances and assonances, in any language but the original. Hebrew writers have always been conscious of the underlying meaning of their words. Examples are as numerous as the entries in the dictionary. That familiar word *shalom* denotes wholeness rather than peace. By its translation as 'twilight', *neshef* has lost its primary significance; it has also lost the onomatopoeic quality of the breeze that blows at sunset and sunrise. The cognate term

choose to live in Israel or in the Diaspora, the Jewish life of our whole community is renewed by their strong sense of identity and Jewish loyalty.

We have an urgent need to create training centres for full time progressive Jewish teachers. We must create an Israeli network of programmes for our youngsters. Otherwise I believe we will face Jewish extinction. And if this is true for Melbourne I have every reason to think it is true for Hampstead, Manchester and Cardiff. ■

Rabbi John Levi is Senior Rabbi of Temp'. Beth Israel in Melbourne. He is the author of two books on Australian Jewish history. He is a member of the Order of Australia and a Vice President of the World Union for Progressive Judaism.

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neshamah is divested of its meaning in the translation 'spirit', where the secondary sense has submerged its Latin derivation. And how far removed is *rachamim* in the English word 'mercy' from *rechem*, the organ of feeling.

But for many Jews in the Diaspora, as contributors to *Back to the Sources* reluctantly concede, the Hebrew text of the Bible is elusive and remote. Happily the English-speaking world is well served by translations. One may choose between the ringing music of the Authorised Version or the greater accuracy of the Revised Version or even the idiosyncratic New English Bible. And there are the excellent translations of the American Jewish Publication Society, and many others. The English text may at times catch the rhythm of the Hebrew, as in the superb 'by reason of the pransings, the pransings of their strong ones'.

We should not wait for our desert island before we read and re-read the Good Book from beginning to end. Everyone ought to read the complete Old Testament at least twice. Occasionally, of course, we are tempted to cheat. The legal passages deter, and there appears to be little inspiration in the passages on antique hygiene or the sacrificial rites or the measurements and furnishings of the Sanctuary.

Nevertheless, there is much to be said for ploughing on. In the Bible even the prosaic has deep interest, particularly if one reads the Hebrew with translation and commentaries. And how often can we advance a guess as to the crux which our commentator will choose for his explanation? This requires as sharp an eye and alert a mind as any exercise of skill.

Then, when we are familiar with the Bible, we can turn with confidence to the rest of Jewish literature. Its treasures are extraordinarily varied and inviting. And in *Back to the Sources* they are set out with consummate clarity. The chapter on the Talmuds contains an analysis of a passage from *Berakhot* which will serve as a useful guide to the uninitiated. We then have a treatment of Midrash, and studies of medieval Bible commentaries (notably Rashi, Rashbam and Ibn Ezra) and medieval Jewish philosophy. A long discussion on Kabbala leads to a chapter on

Hasidism, and the volume is brought to a close with a chapter on the Prayer Book. Each chapter concludes with a section entitled 'Where to Go from Here' in which guidance, including bibliographies, is given to the reader who may wish to pursue further his investigations in that field. This is an admirable concept.

In his Introduction the editor of the volume modestly defines the purpose of the book as 'to deal with the great texts in a popular, nonacademic context'. It does much more than that, and within no more than some four hundred pages. This book will be acclaimed by experts as well as novices as a most significant contribution to the furtherance of adult Jewish study in the English-speaking world. I hope that it will be widely read. ■

Professor J. B. Segal was born in Newcastle in 1912. He visited Palestine frequently where his father was a distinguished Hebrew University professor. He is Emeritus Professor of Semitic Languages at SOAS and President of Leo Baeck College.

LAST EXIT FROM GATESHEAD - INTO CHURCH

MARCUS BRAYBROOKE

Child of the Covenant

by Michele Guinness

Hodder and Stoughton, 1985, £1.75
157 pp Paperback

A TIBETAN MONK HAS told me that at least three of the young men who have spent time at his centre have eventually been ordained as Anglican clergymen. It was only by exploring another tradition that they were able to discover the spiritual depths of their own, which have been obscured by the conventional compromises of their nominally Christian homes. 'Passing over and coming back', says John Dunne in *The Way of All the Earth* 'is the spiritual adventure of our time.'

Some return to their original

spiritual home, others remain in their adopted religion, but with a newly found appreciative sympathy for the religion into which they were born. Two English Buddhist friends both say how much deeper now is their understanding of Christianity than when they were schooled in it as youngsters — and one certainly is far more appreciative of the niceties of Choral Evensong than I am!

Michele Guinness is one who has gained a new sympathy for the religion of her birth whilst remaining a member of her adopted faith. She tells the story of her Jewish childhood in Gateshead. Her father, a doctor, was sceptical. But her mother whose main interest seems to have been making the house as perfect as possible, tried to preserve an orthodox home. '*Yiddishkeit*, not Judaism, that was what really mattered to my mother and her friends', she writes.

Michele tells of her questioning and her frustration with the restrictions of home life. At College, she meets some Christians, eventually gets baptised, to the great sadness of her parents and falls in love with Peter, who wants to be ordained. 'Well', says her mother, 'I may yet be mother-in-law to the Archbishop of Canterbury. What would our rabbi say to that?'

Michele Guinness is much concerned with the question of identity. She wants to retain her Jewishness and is critical of many Christians who are ignorant of their Jewish roots.

For her, Christ fulfils her Judaism. My difficulty is that whilst this may be true for her, the implication is that it should be true for all Jews — and certainly the 'house-style' of the publishers encourages this. Yet this conflicts with the conviction of a growing number of Christian theologians that God's covenant with Israel is eternal and that missionary activity of Christians towards Jews is wrong.

If this book is read as one person's story, it is easy reading. It only touches on questions of Jewish identity and Jewish-Christian relations. My fear is that it will encourage the Christian triumphalism which I believe to be theologically mistaken and which makes dialogue more difficult. ■

The Rev. Marcus Braybrooke is executive director of the Council of Christians and Jews.

נשים וצדדים" חגבין בתפלה, לפי שהיא מצות-
עשה שיהא בזמן גרמא. אלא חיוב מצוה זו כך הוא:
שיהא אדם מתחנן ומתפלל בקל-יום ומגיד שבחו של הקדוש-
ברוך-הוא; ואמר-כך שואל צרכיו" שהוא צריך להם בבקשה
ובתחנון; ואמר-כך נותן שבה והודנה" לה על-הטובה שהשפיע
17 - כל-אחד לפי כחו.

WHY WE THANK GOD

EVEN WHEN TIMES ARE BAD

RAMBAM CALLED THE second of the fourteen major divisions of his great Code '*Ahava*', love. Its subject matter is prayer — man talking to God, reading His word, *Torah*, showing his love of God by declaring his faith, *Shema*, and adorning himself with the outward signs, *Tsitsit*, *Tefillin*, circumcision.

The second section of '*Ahava*' is called '*Tefilla*', prayer, and deals specifically with the '*tefilla*', par excellence, sometimes called by us '*amida*' or '*shemone esre*'. In some form or other this remains to this day the central statutory prayer of all Jews, whether orthodox or reform.

Let us look closely at the text of the second paragraph of the opening chapter of '*Hilchot Tefilla*', the Laws of the Tefilla.

'Therefore women and slaves are obliged to say the *tefilla*, for it is a positive commandment not limited in time. The essence of the *mitzva* of prayer is this, that a man should entreat and pray each day. He should declare the praises of the Holy One, blessed be He, then ask with appropriate supplication for his own needs, then render praise and thanks to God for the goodness He has poured down to him, each according to his abilities.' (Note that 'man' here is to be understood as 'man or woman'.)

THEREFORE — i.e. because as Rambam explained in his opening paragraph, prayer is 'the service of

the heart', and derives from the verse 'you shall serve the Lord your God with all your heart ...' — and thus clearly not limited by time or place.

WOMEN, SLAVES — The rabbis held that women and non-Jewish slaves were exempt from certain Mitzvot which had to be performed at specific times; this was perhaps a recognition of the way in which social conventions of the time tied women, as well as slaves, to a domestic role in which they could not control the allotment of time.

Rambam, by his present argument, has bypassed the other reason the Talmud gives for women to pray: '*Tefilla*' is '*rahame*', an appeal for mercy — but the Aramaic term also means 'love', and women need mercy as much as men'.

THE ESSENCE OF THE MITZVA, literally: 'the obligation of this mitzva' — Characteristically, Rambam has systematized the vast mass of talmudic rules and formulations of prayer around a simple, basic concept. In this, one sees his greatness as a codifier.

DAILY — As developed by the rabbis, 'daily' becomes 'three times a day'. There is a *discipline* of prayer, not only a spontaneous outpouring of the heart. Regular prayer is like the regular exercise of the athlete. He does not run his fastest each day, nor is he always in the mood to run. Yet when the day of the great race comes he reaps the benefit of his disciplined regime. So it is with prayer. We are not necessarily 'in the mood' three times a day, nor always at our most

spiritual. But it is those to whom prayer is a familiar exercise who, in their heightened moments, 'pierce the veil' between man and God.

PRAISE, NEEDS, THANKS — This is the framework of our '*shemone esre*' prayer.

The first three blessings are in praise of God, and last three are thanksgiving, incorporating the final prayer for peace. The middle, traditionally 13 blessings are requests for our daily needs — knowledge, forgiveness, health and the like. On Sabbaths and Festivals the middle section is replaced by a shorter one, appropriate to the day.

PRAISE — Earlier in the Code Rambam claimed that intelligent meditation on nature leads to a sense of awe before the Creator and this leads to love of him. Awe, and ultimately love, form the basis of praise. The '*Tefilla*' itself opens with the 'Patriarchs', so that history, too, becomes a medium for praise.

NEEDS — Why pray for our needs? Doesn't God know what is good for us? Is He going to change things anyway?

Rambam had special difficulty with this problem, for in the 'Guide for the Perplexed' he denied that God's Providence extended to individuals in the 'sublunar', i.e. material, sphere. His answer is bold. Through the exercise of free will in accordance with Torah man raises himself *above* the material world, becoming one with the 'Active Intellect', and directly subject to divine providence. Let us translate from mediaeval to modern terms.



SERVING UP FRONT

Sir,

HERE IN BETH SHALOM Cambridge, we are forced to do things differently. We are too small to afford a rabbi so have to run our own weekly and festival services. However, until two years ago, I was in fact leading the services on most occasions and, jokingly of course, members even called me 'Rabbi'. God has his own way of teaching us how to behave, and I fell ill and unable to take services for five weeks.

That made us all sit up and take notice because although the congregation managed, it was clear that something needed to be done. Over the course of the next year, we deliberately encouraged, even at times insisted that members lead services themselves, perhaps at their own homes on Erev Shabbat. In spite of protestations, and at times with some assistance, the number of service leaders increased from two to six or seven.

However, only two congregants were comfortable, or confident enough to read from the Torah. In January this year, we determined to change this too. A group met one hour early, just once a month, before the Shabbat morning service and each one with his/her Tikun Sofrim, we started practising. Now, five months later four additional congregants have successfully led a Shabbat morning service including the Torah portion.

In a small congregation it is easier perhaps, but with the talent that surely exists in large congregations. *If rabbis made a policy to encourage individuals*, everyone would benefit. Rabbis would not have to stand 'up front' all the time, and individual development would result. Even if only a section of the service was read, the listener, the reader and the rabbi might all feel they have gained.

RAMON PHILLIPS
Cambridge

SPOILED ROTTEN BY KING JAMES

Sir,

MY HEART WENT OUT TO Esther Bergner in her lament for the traditional English translations of beloved Hebrew texts.

Perhaps the trouble is twofold: As native English, rather than Hebrew speakers and 'thinkers' we are spoiled rotten by the divine prose-poetry of the King James translation of the Hebrew Bible.

How skilled he was as an Hebraist, I know not, but Matthew Arnold declared: 'The Hebrew language and genius are seen in the Book of Isaiah at their perfection — this has naturally had its effect on the English translators of the Bible, whose Version nowhere rises to such beauty as in this book' (quoted in the Hertz *Chumash*, notes to *Haf-torah Va'Ethchanan*, page 776).

It is surely much more satisfying to drench oneself cerebrally and spiritually in the quasi-mystical and even mystifying language of the Jacobean version, than to read, for example, the quite accessible but rather pedestrian phraseology of books like the R.S.G.B. *Siddur* and — *l'havdil* — *The New English Bible*.

Second, I think the dilemma ranges no deeper than common custom and conditions. We like what we know and loathe what smacks of change. At a simplistic level, small children adore to recite or to be read the same stories daily. Woe betide the careless adult who inadvertently changes one word of a favourite bedtime tale!

Even when like me one is totally unqualified to discuss the merits of a particular Hebrew-English translation, it is pleasant to think one may enjoy English versions of the Hebrew Bible, and prayers as much for their own sake(s) as for spiritual sustenance.

NATALIE WOOD
Manchester

Rambam is saying: 'God does not listen to the prayers of those who submerge themselves in selfish, material pursuits. But for those who, through free choice, raise themselves above that level, He can change the world.'

THANKSGIVING — World Thanksgiving Center has pointed out that all religions, in their most orthodox as well their radical forms, stress the value of gratitude. This is true even of Buddhism, which does not recognise a personal God. So thanksgiving is an even more universal concept than that of God. Jewish teaching requires us to 'bless God for bad things just as for good'. Hence a blessing 'Blessed be the True Judge' is recited even on the occasion of a bereavement. It is hard, recalling the Holocaust and being mindful of the suffering and destruction in our present world, to render thanks 'for your miracles which are constantly with us'. Yet thanksgiving is shallow if it cannot encompass the knowledge of evil. Those precious moments when one has the sense that the world and our lives are a wonderful gift, surpassing our understanding and demanding blessing, are the moments in which thanksgiving redeems evil. ■

Rabbi Dr. Norman Solomon was born in Cardiff in 1933. He studied in London, Cambridge and Manchester and served the Hampstead Synagogue before moving to Birmingham. He is currently Director-Designate of the Centre for the Study of Judaism and Jewish/Christian Relations and Lecturer in Jewish Studies, Selly Oak Colleges.

ACTS OF DESECRATION

Sir,

I AM DELIGHTED TO RESPOND to the last paragraph of Esther Bergner's letter in the Spring 1985 issue No. 7.

I too, feel strongly against the continuous process of translations of Scriptural literature.

The message of the Bible is eternal and I regard new translations to accommodate language variations or substitutions to be an unnecessary desecration.

I have examined various publications, of which there have been as many, I believe, as five since 1917, of The Jewish Publications Society of America.

Surely one must begin to wonder how such fresh interpretations can be really useful. Acknowledged works of great literature and poetry, and who can deny this description to the Holy Bible, cannot ever need 'directness and simplicity'.

It is even suggested that new variations yield a better sense of understanding — yet it is admitted that in certain cases 'sure translation is impossible' because of insuperable difficulties. This makes translation almost an act of sacrilege so far as I am concerned.

It is comparable to the ridiculous attempts to bring Mozart up to date.

How appropriate and correct is your correspondent in quoting the *Four Quartets* of T. S. Eliot. What can possibly be wrong in achieving a personal interpretation and meaning of various phrases which may not be clear at first sight?

I have the *mitzvah* from time to time to read the synagogue *Shabbat* service *Haftarot* and the wardens now know so well that I bring my own copy of the Holy Scriptures to show quite clearly my preference for such privileged occasions.

JACK BENSON
Wimbledon,
London SW19

OVER THE THE TOP

Sir,

IN ANSWER TO YOUR QUESTION, Esther Bergner, yes, I feel very much like you about the sometime laboured translations and changing of wording in the Prayer Book, especially in the Psalms.

I feel equally strongly about the alternative offerings to the lovely evocative and nostalgic tunes of many of our traditional prayers.

Whilst I do appreciate the need for a certain amount of up-dating and progression, why do we so often go over the top by always trying to improve what so often defies improvement.

HAZEL JACOBS
Weybridge, Surrey.

MURDER

Sir,

ALLOW ME TO POINT OUT an error in Ilya Kovar's very interesting article. The sixth commandment quite clearly says 'Thou shalt not murder'. There is a world of difference between that and 'kill'.

ARTHUR HOLMES
London NW7

DIVIDED

Sir,

I WAS INTERESTED TO SEE that your cover picture of Jerusalem Jews at the Western Wall, taken from Martin Gilbert's book *Jerusalem, Rebirth of a City*, shows a man and two women together close to the Wall.

The picture is dated 1896. Today in 1985 men and women are segregated at the Wall by a fence.

Perhaps someone can explain when and why this division was imposed.

MONA LESTER
Co-Editor,
Sinai Chronicle
Leeds

SAINT VS OGRE

Sir,

MY, HOW EDGWARE RE-form over-reacts! I had to look up the previous issue of *Manna* to see what David Goldberg had dared to say about Rabbi Leigh when I saw the howls of protest from Stanmore and points west. And what had he said that was so terrible? He had referred to the venerable Rabbi as 'an ogre' and although *of course* Rabbi Michael Leigh is not an ogre, he could surely be referred to as such *in the light of his views on the merger*.

In the same way, he could be described as a saint for the way he feels about a possible link-up with the Conservative Movement. Surely it is a matter of degree?

As a Reform Jew in Finchley, happy with Reform here, but who feels far more at home in the local Liberal synagogue than in Edgware Reform, I would not in the least mind if Rabbi Leigh were to refer to me as an ogre for so saying.

LARRY ROSS
London N3

MERGER

Sir,

IN REPLY TO LAST ISSUE'S Editorial, I certainly support a merger between RSGB and ULPS. We had a meeting to discuss this at Menorah Synagogue last year and I think the advantages of a merger far outweigh the difficulties.

Often we have cause to deplore the intolerance of members of Jewish Orthodoxy. Here is our opportunity to show the benefit of enlightened co-operation. I would welcome a referendum on this subject.

IRENE KURER
Menorah Synagogue
Cheshire

ABOUT THREE YEARS ago I had gone to *Machanei Yehuda*, Jerusalem's colourful street-market, to pick up some fish, when I found the place in a state of more than usual turmoil. There were police everywhere and loud shouts of altercation. When I asked the fishmonger what it was all about, he said:

'We should have hanged them, the lot of them'.

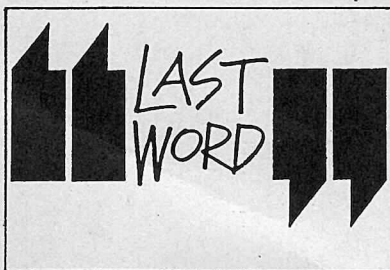
The 'them' turned out to be employees of *Kol Yisroel*, Israel's radio and television network.

The Kahan report had been published that morning and *Kol Yisroel* had rashly sent a recording van into the market for some *vox-populi* reports. The *populi* made their *vox* known in no uncertain manner. Were it not for the prompt intervention of the police, they might have lynched both the reporting and recording staff, and set fire to their van. *Kol Yisroel*, the Voice of Israel, it would seem, was regarded as an enemy of the people.

One of the most attractive things about Israel is the animation, candour and independence of the media. Even in the darkest moments of Likud rule they offered one the reassurance that the conscience of Israel was alive and alert. The religious papers, I must add, were an exception. Reading them one kept wondering what was it about a religious upbringing which deprived people of their basic humanity. The media determination to seek out the truth, wherever it might lie did not, however, especially in the aftermath of the Lebanese invasion, gain them much in popular affection. More than half of Israel's population stem from countries without a democratic tradition. Not all of them appreciate the value of a free press. Indeed, I suspect they feel that they would be better off without one.

But I wonder if this attitude is limited to Jews of Oriental extraction. One can see signs of it also in the Anglo-Jewish community which has always prided itself — one doesn't know on what evidence — on its sophistication.

About a year ago there was a letter in the *Jewish Chronicle* asking 'what can be done to stop Rabbi Lionel Blue?'



MARY SEATON

Now it would have been bad enough if the writer had taken exception to something that Rabbi Blue had written in the J.C. But, unlike the millions who follow Rabbi Blue with pleasure, he had taken exception to some items he had broadcast on the BBC. Instead of limiting himself to an expression of his own displeasure, he suggested that because *he* didn't like the broadcasts, no one else should listen to them.

One sees a similar attitude in the correspondence generated by Chaim Bermant. That some readers of the J.C. should on occasion disagree with some of the things written by Bermant is perhaps not surprising. What is disturbing is the number of people who write in not only to argue with Bermant, but to demand

that he be dismissed. Most disturbing of all, however, was a letter which appeared recently from the Rev Michael Plaskow of the Woodside Park Synagogue.

I quote it in full:

'Not so long ago, the *Jewish Chronicle* quite rightly refused to publish an article which denigrated circumcision for the reason that this rite is one of the basic tenets of Judaism. The same criterion should have been used with regard to *mikvah* so that no *Torah*-thinking Jew need be insulted by a similar letter or article written by a Jew in your valued columns. May this equally basic doctrine of our faith help us to gain in spiritual strength.'

The article referred to on circumcision, after being turned down by the J.C. was eventually published in the *Observer*.

If a Jew has reservations about any aspect of Judaism, no matter how basic, where is he to air them if not in a paper like the J.C.? I think the J.C. was wrong in rejecting that particular article — though it might reasonably have asked that it be toned down — because it created a precedent which people like the Rev Plaskow are anxious to enlarge. There was nothing remotely insulting or offensive about the letter on the *mikvah* to which Rev Plaskow refers. What he is really demanding is that no one should be allowed to question what he and people like him hold to be true.

I think the J.C. performs an important public service in publishing such letters for it highlights one of our least attractive characteristics — our intolerance. This is by no means limited to the Orthodox, though they have far more to be intolerant about.

I don't know if our intolerance derives from our experience, or if our experience is, in part, a result of our intolerance.

But we are insufficiently aware of it, and disinclined to do anything about it. ■

Mary Seaton's continental birth and Scottish upbringing give her writing its distinctive accents. David Goldberg is on sabbatical.



The Manor House Society

The Manor House Society is an ambitious cultural venture. Its aim is to bring a wide range of Jewish cultural and intellectual events of a high level within easy reach of a large audience. Regular activities include concerts, debates, exhibitions, drama, seminars and lectures.

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday 18th September, 8.00 p.m.

*How Just is British Society? A High Holy Days Debate
with*

*Rt. Hon. Lord Young, Minister Without Portfolio
Rt. Hon. Lord Lever, former Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster
The Revd. Dr. Kenneth Slack,
former Director of Christian Aid and Moderator of the United Reformed Church
Rabbi Julia Neuberger, rabbi, South London Liberal Synagogue*

Sunday 20th October, 7.30 p.m.

An Evening with Maureen Lipman

Sunday 10th November to Sunday 24th November

An Exhibition of Sculpture by Jacqueline King-Cline

Sunday 17th November to Sunday 24th November

*Jewish Book Fair opened by Lord Weidenfeld
with Lynne Reid Banks, Chaim Bermant, Lionel Blue, Ray Bruce, Lionel Davidson,
Michael Freedland, Albert Friedlander, Rosemary Friedman, Sheila & Charles Front,
Martin Gilbert, Bernard Kops, George Layton, Hyam Maccoby, Jonathan Magonet,
Evelyn Rose, Bernice Rubens, Clive Sinclair, Martin Weiner and Stuart Young*

Brochure and membership application form from:

**Manor House Society,
Sternberg Centre for Judaism, The Manor House,
80 East End Road, Finchley, London N3 2SY**