

10.4.3 Spiritual Tales

Isaac Luria (1534–1572) developed the mysticism of the Kabbalah. Unlike Moses de Leon (see Reading 10.4.2), he did not understand creation in terms of the emanation of God's attributes but, rather, in terms of God's withdrawal. God withdraws into himself in order to make room for the created world. This withdrawal causes God's *Shekhinah*, or Presence, to become trapped in the world. It is not just the Jews who live in exile. Even God's Presence lives in exile!

The mystical return to God now becomes the return of God's *Shekhinah* to its rightful home. When harmony and unity are fully restored to the divine life, the redemption of all life will occur. When all aspects of God are restored to their original, unalienated condition, the universe will be similarly restored. When God's Presence is freed from captivity, the Jews will be freed from their oppressors.

In 1648 there was a widespread massacre of Jews after a Ukrainian uprising against Poland. Eighteen short years later came the elation and then the bitter disappointment caused by the messianic claims, then apostasy of Sabbatai Zvi (see 10.4). Rabbinic Judaism with its dual Torah was hard-pressed to preserve the morale of the Jews of eastern Europe.

Some rabbis and other Jewish leaders began to form various kinds of spiritual and pietistic movements drawing on the Talmud as well as the Kabbalistic mysticism of the *Zohar* and Isaac Luria's ideas about the exiled *Shekhinah*. Messianic expectations entered the picture as well. In the 1730s the **Baal Shem Tov** (1700–1760) began to attract a circle of Talmudic scholars, mystics, preachers, healers, rabbis, and others. This spiritually charged mix gave birth to the Hasidic movement.

There are a variety of Hasidic circles each centering on a *zadik*, or holy and pious leader who embodies an ideal of wisdom. Some scholars distinguish between the "Hasidut of Mysticism" and the "Hasidism of Faith." The former emphasizes God as an impersonal power or force who dwells in all existence. The latter emphasizes God as personal and transcendent, yet deeply involved in the major phases of history: creation, revelation, and redemption.

Nahman of Bratslav (1772–1810), a Ukrainian, was a Hasidic leader who, while deeply mystical, is more representative of the Hasidism of Faith. He developed a type of teaching device—the spiritual

tale—that became typical of the Hasidic movement. Below we sample one of his tales.



NAHMAN OF BRATSLAV

The Loss of the Princess

READING QUESTIONS

1. Write a commentary on this tale explaining what you think its religious meaning is. [*Hint: The Princess is the Shekhinah.*]
2. How might this story give comfort to Jews suffering persecution?

Rav Nahman answered and said: On the way, I told a tale (of such power) that whoever heard it had thoughts of repentance. This is it.

Once there was a king. The king had six sons and one daughter. The daughter was extremely important to him and he cherished her and enjoyed her company very much. Once, on a certain day when he was with her, he became enraged at her and from his mouth slipped the sentence: "May The Not-Good take you away." That night she went to her room, and in the morning no one knew where she was. Her father, the king, grieved deeply and he sent here and there searching for her.

Then the viceroy, seeing that the king was deeply grieved, rose and requested that a servant, a horse, and money (for expenses) be given to him. And he set out to search for her. And he searched for her for a very long time until he found her.

(Now Rav Nahman tells how he searched for her until he found her.)

He traveled for a long time, here and there, in deserts and fields and forests. And he searched for her for a very long time. While traveling in the desert, he saw a path off to the side and reflected: "Since I have been traveling such a long time in the desert and cannot find her, I shall follow this path—maybe I will come to a settled place." And he traveled for a long time. At last he saw a castle with many soldiers posted around it. The

castle was very beautiful and the soldiers were standing around it in perfect order. And he feared that the soldiers would not let him in, but he reflected: "I shall attempt it."

He left his horse and walked to the castle. They let him pass and did not hinder him at all. He walked from room to room without hindrance and came to a hall where he saw a king sitting with his crown, many soldiers standing guard, and many musicians playing instruments in his presence. And it was lovely and beautiful there. Neither the king nor any other person asked him anything. He saw delicacies and fine foods there, and he stopped to eat and went to lie down in a corner to observe what was going on there. He observed that the king ordered that they bring the queen and they went to bring her. When they brought in the queen, there was a great tumult and great joy and the musicians played and sang mightily. They placed a throne for her next to the king. And she was the lost princess! And the viceroy recognized her. After a time, the queen glanced about and saw someone lying in the corner and recognized the viceroy. She rose from the throne and went there and touched him.

She asked him: "Do you recognize me?"

He answered: "Yes. I recognize you. You are the princess who has been lost." And he asked: "How did you get here?"

She answered: "Because that sentence slipped from my father's mouth. And this place is *The Not-Good*."

He told her that her father was deeply grieved and that he had searched for her for many years. And he asked her: "How can I free you from here?"

She told him: "You cannot free me unless you choose a place and stay there for one whole year. During this entire year you must yearn for me, to free me from here. You will constantly yearn and search and hope to free me. And you will fast. On the last day of the year, you shall fast and not sleep from sunset to sunset."

And he went and did so. At the end of the year, on the last day, he fasted and did not sleep. He set out to go to the princess to free her. As he went, he saw a tree, and on it grew very fine apples. He craved them very much, and he went to eat from them. As soon as he ate from the apple, he fell over and sleep seized him. And he slept for a very long time. His servant shook him, but he did not wake up. After some time, he stirred from his sleep and asked the servant: "Where am I in the world?"

The servant told the viceroy the entire story: "You have been sleeping a very long time, several years, and I, in the meanwhile, have lived off the fruit." The viceroy grieved deeply and went to the castle and found the princess. And she wailed bitterly to him: "If you had

only come on that day you would have freed me from here. Because of that one day, you have lost everything. It is true that not eating is very difficult, especially on the last day when the evil impulse waxes strong. And so, choose another place and stay there, too, for a whole year. On the last day you will be allowed to eat. Only do not sleep and do not drink wine so that you will not fall asleep, because the main thing is sleep."

He went and did so. On the last day he was walking back there and he saw a spring gushing forth and it looked red and smelled of wine. He asked the servant: "Do you see this spring? There should be water in it, but it looks reddish and smells of wine." And he went and tasted a bit from the spring. Immediately, he fell over and slept some seventy years. During this period many soldiers passed by with their baggage trains traveling behind them. And the servant hid from the soldiers. Afterwards, there passed a carriage and the princess was sitting in it. She stopped next to the viceroy and alighted and sat next to him and recognized him. She shook him vigorously, but he could not wake up. She began to wail about him, that all the labors performed and travails endured for so many years in order to free her were lost because of that one day when he could have freed her. She wept much about it: "It's a great pity both for him and for me, because I have been here such a long time and cannot get out." Afterwards she took the kerchief off her head and wrote on it with her tears and left it next to him. She rose and sat in her carriage and rode off.

Later, he woke up and asked the servant: "Where am I in the world?" The servant told him the whole story, that many soldiers had passed by and that the carriage had been there and the princess had wept and cried out: "It's a great pity for you and for me!" In the meanwhile, the viceroy glanced about and saw that the kerchief was lying next to him. And he asked: "Where did this come from?" And the servant answered that the princess had left it after having written on it with her tears. The viceroy took it and raised it to the sun. He began to see the letters and read what was written there, all her lament and cry, that she was no longer in the former castle, but that he should search for a golden mountain and pearly castle. "There you shall find me!"

He left the servant behind and went on alone to search for her. And he traveled for several years searching for her. He reasoned that surely there is no golden mountain and pearly castle in a settled place because he was expert in the map of the world. And so (he concluded): "I shall go to the deserts." He went to search for her in the deserts for many and many a year. At last he saw a man so huge that his size was not human and he was carrying a tree so huge that no such tree is found in any settled place.

That giant asked him: "Who are you?"

The viceroy answered: "I am a human being."

The giant wondered and said: "I have been in the desert for a long time, but I have never seen a human being here."

The viceroy told him the whole story, and that he was searching for a golden mountain and a pearly castle. The giant said to him: "Surely it does not exist at all." He rebuffed him and told him that they had deluded his mind with nonsense, that it surely did not exist at all. And the viceroy began to weep bitterly and said: "It surely, definitely exists somewhere." The wild man rebuffed him again saying that they surely had deluded him with nonsense. And the viceroy said that it surely exists.

The wild man said to the viceroy: "In my opinion, this is nonsense. But since you insist, I, who am in charge of all the animals, will do you a favor and summon them all. Since they roam throughout the entire world, one of them might know about that mountain and castle." And he summoned them all, from the smallest to the biggest, all kinds of animals. He asked them, but they answered that they had not seen anything of the sort. So he said to the viceroy: "See! They have deluded you with nonsense. If you listen to me, you will go back, because you will surely not find it since it does not exist anywhere in the world."

But the viceroy insisted vigorously and said that it surely, definitely exists. The wild man said to the viceroy: "Here, in the desert, I have a brother who is in charge of all the fowl. Perhaps they know since they fly high in the air. Perhaps they have seen that mountain and castle. Go to him and tell him that I have sent you." And the viceroy went on for many and many a year in search of him. Finally he again found a man as huge as the former one and he, too, carried a huge tree. And this giant asked the viceroy the same question. The viceroy told him the whole story adding that his brother had sent him. And he, too, rebuffed him saying that it surely does not exist. The viceroy insisted that it does. The giant said to the viceroy: "I am in charge of all the birds. I shall summon them—perhaps they know." He summoned all the birds and asked them all, from the smallest to the biggest, and they answered that they knew nothing about that mountain and castle. The man said to him: "You see that it surely does not exist anywhere in the world. If you listen to me, go back." But the viceroy insisted and said that it surely does exist somewhere in the world. The giant said: "Further in the desert you will find my brother who is in charge of all the winds. They roam throughout the whole world—perhaps they know."

The viceroy traveled and searched for many and many a year, and finally found a man as huge as the for-

mer one and he, too, carried a huge tree. This giant asked the viceroy the same question, and the viceroy told him the whole story. This giant, too, rebuffed him, but the viceroy insisted again. Finally, the third giant said to the viceroy that he would do him a favor and summon all the winds to come and he would ask them. He summoned them, and all the winds came and he asked them all. None of them knew anything about that mountain and castle. The giant said to the viceroy: "Don't you see that they have told you nonsense?" And the viceroy began to weep loudly and said: "I know that it surely must exist."

At that moment he saw that another wind had arrived. And the giant in charge of the winds was very angry with it: "Why are you late? Didn't I order all the winds to come? Why didn't you come with them?"

The wind answered him: "I was detained because I had to transport a princess to a golden mountain and a pearly castle."

And the viceroy was overjoyed to hear this.

The giant in charge asked the wind: "What is expensive there?"

The wind said: "Everything is very expensive there."

So the giant in charge of the winds told the viceroy: "Since you have been searching for her for such a long time and have performed so many labors, and money might now be an obstacle, I am giving you a purse, and whenever you put your hand in it you will draw money from it." And he ordered a wind to take him there. The storm wind came and carried him there and brought him up to the gate. The soldiers standing guard there would not let him enter the city, but he put his hand into the purse and took out the money and bribed them and entered the city. And it was a beautiful city. He went to a rich man and arranged for his board, knowing that he had to spend time there, because he had to employ intelligence and wisdom to free her.

(And how he freed her, Rav Nahman did not tell.)

And finally he did free her.

10.5 THE SECOND AGE OF DIVERSITY (ca. 1800– THE PRESENT)

The advent of the modern world brought many changes and challenges to Judaism. The Jews of western Europe, who had been largely restricted to ghetto life in closed communities, now were "emancipated" and given the same rights as all citizens. The emancipation was, however, a double-edged sword.

Along with emancipation came nationalism. Nationalism divides people into competing national

groups sharing a common history, language, land, and political future. While it brought with it Jewish emancipation, it also threatened the existence of traditional Jewish communities. The nation-state demanded of the emancipated Jews, as it demanded of all citizens, allegiance. Prior to this, the ultimate allegiance of Jews was to their religious communities. Now, allegiance was threatened and pressures to assimilate threatened Jewish identity. Inter marriage with non-Jews, service to the state, becoming co-workers and fellow citizens with Gentile neighbors—all of this made undreamed of choices and opportunities possible, but the danger was the loss of a tradition that defined Judaism.

Modernity ushered in a new view of science called scientific naturalism. According to scientific naturalism, science is a process of discovering the objective and natural laws that govern the workings of the universe. The appeal to the supernatural as an explanatory power faded into the background, and the creation stories of Genesis began to appear as delightful, but quaint, old-fashioned myths.

In addition to the rise of nationalism and scientific naturalism in the modern period, scholars began to accept a new way of doing history called historicism. The past is best known, the historicist argued, by a critical and careful sifting of evidence. Knowledge of the past is established not by traditional stories but, rather, by careful assessment of historical facts. Historicism casts doubt on the historical reliability of the writings in the *Tanakh*. Valued stories became legends and folktales, and authoritative authors disappeared into the mists of time. Moses, the modern historians concluded, did not write the Torah.

Jewish reactions in Europe and North America to emancipation, nationalism, scientific naturalism, and historicism spawned a new creative force resulting in more variety and diversity in Judaism. One reaction is modernism. In general the modernistic reaction seeks to retain parts of the tradition, but update it so that it is compatible with the modern world. Precisely how to do that led to the creation of Reform, Conservative (Positive-Historical), Reconstructionist, and Orthodox Judaism.

Another reaction is secularism. Secularism turns the traditional religious ideology of the Jews into a political one. History replaces God as the source of moral norms, the notion of an oppressed people replaces the religious view of a chosen people, and the messianic age is reinterpreted as the people's liberation from oppression and persecution. Various so-

cialists and Zionist Jewish movements preached this new torah.

Traditionalism constitutes a third reaction to modernity. Traditionalists retain the old ways complete with supernaturalistic and premodern understandings of God, Torah, Israel, and the Messiah. The Hasidic movements of the twentieth century exemplify this approach.

10.5.1 Reform and Conservative Judaism

In response to emancipation and the new knowledge created by the Enlightenment, some Jewish leaders in Germany began a reform movement. They attempted to adjust Judaism to the modern world by redefining what they took to be most important in the tradition. Although many people were involved in a number of stages of reform, the founding of **Reform Judaism** is usually associated with Abraham Geiger (1810–1874) and Samuel Holdheim (1806–1860).

Abraham Geiger understood both the written and oral Torah as a progressive, ever-changing body of tradition shaped by meaningful responses to historical events. If historical conditions have changed for the Jew, Geiger reasoned, then the law must be reformulated to make it more relevant to the present circumstances. Geiger also argued that the essence of Judaism is an “ethical monotheism.” Judaism, at its heart, is a religion that emphasizes the importance of the highest moral standards. Ritual law is much less important than moral law.

Reform Judaism changed Judaism from a culture-religion based on ethnic identification to a voluntary association. Judaism became a religion in the modern sense of an organization that one can join (or not join) and that holds certain beliefs, recommends a particular way to live, and provides a set of rituals to practice.

Immigrants transferred German Reform Judaism to the United States as early as 1848 with the founding of the first successful Reform synagogue, Mt. Sinai, in Baltimore, Maryland. In 1885 the Pittsburgh Platform (see the selection) was written under the direction of Isaac Meyer Wise (1819–1900) and Kaufmann Kohler (1843–1926). They formulated the key ideas of American Reform Judaism.

Orthodox Judaism represents a negative reaction to the reform movement. **Orthodoxy** affirms that

the written and oral Torah are revealed by God and should not be changed by humans. All of the law is binding, and the Jew is under an absolute and unchanging divine mandate to fulfill it. “The Thirteen Principles of Maimonides” (see Reading 10.4.1) constitute an unofficial creed for most Orthodox.

There is no simple uniformity in Orthodox Judaism today. The “modern/centrist” Orthodox affirm the Torah and its divine origin as do the “rightist/ultra” Orthodox. However, the ultra-Orthodox deny any intellectual or spiritual validity to the non-Jewish world and non-Orthodox forms of Judaism. This view leads to a deliberate policy of withdrawal and separatism in all matters. The ultra-Orthodox elevate even dress, hairstyles, and language to the level of religious commands.

Conservative Judaism began as an attempt to find a middle way between the extremes of Reform and Orthodox Judaism. Conservative Jews think that genuine Judaism embraces both tradition *and* change. In their view, the Orthodox are not responsive enough to changing historical circumstances and the Reform reject far too much of the rich tradition that has sustained the Jews over the centuries. What is needed, Conservative Jews reason, is a better balance between the old and the new.

The rabbinic scholar Solomon Schechter (1847–1915) is the chief architect of Conservative Judaism in America. During his presidency (1902–1915) of the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York, he created the model for the Conservative synagogue. His presidential address, in the second selection, provides an informative contrast to the Pittsburgh Platform of Reform Judaism.



The Pittsburgh Platform

READING QUESTION

1. What differences do you notice between the Pittsburgh Platform and Schechter's address that, in your opinion, distinguishes Reform from Conservative Judaism?

From *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, edited by I. Singer (New York: Funk and Wagnalls Company, 1907), p. 215.

1. We recognize in every religion an attempt to grasp the Infinite, and in every mode, source, or book of revelation held sacred in any religious system the consciousness of the indwelling of God in man. We hold that Judaism presents the highest conception of the God-idea as taught in our Holy Scriptures and developed and spiritualized by the Jewish teachers, in accordance with the moral and philosophical progress of their respective ages. We maintain that Judaism preserved and defended, midst continual struggles and trials and under enforced isolation, this God-idea as the central religious truth for the human race.

2. We recognize in the Bible the record of the consecration of the Jewish people to its mission as the priest of the one God, and value it as the most potent instrument of religious and moral instruction. We hold that the modern discoveries of scientific researches in the domain of nature and history are not antagonistic to the doctrines of Judaism, the Bible reflecting the primitive ideas of its own age, and at times clothing its conception of divine Providence and Justice dealing with man in miraculous narrative.

3. We recognize in the Mosaic legislation a system of training the Jewish people for its mission during its national life in Palestine, and today we accept as binding only its moral laws, and maintain only such ceremonies as elevate and sanctify our lives, but reject all such as are not adapted to the views and habits of modern civilization.

4. We hold that all such Mosaic and rabbinical laws as regulate diet, priestly purity, and dress originated in ages and under the influence of ideas entirely foreign to our present mental and spiritual state. They fail to impress the modern Jew with a spirit of priestly holiness; their observance in our days is apt rather to obstruct than to further modern spiritual elevation.

5. We recognize, in the modern era of universal culture of heart and intellect, the approaching of the realization of Israel's great Messianic hope for the establishment of the kingdom of truth, justice, and peace among all men. We consider ourselves no longer a nation, but a religious community, and therefore expect neither a return to Palestine, nor a sacrificial worship under the sons of Aaron, nor the restoration of any of the laws concerning the Jewish State.

6. We recognize in Judaism a progressive religion, ever striving to be in accord with the postulates of reason. We are convinced of the utmost necessity of preserving the historical identity with our great past. Christianity and Islam being daughter religions of Judaism, we ap-

preciate their providential mission to aid in the spreading of monotheistic and moral truth. We acknowledge that the spirit of broad humanity of our age is our ally in the fulfillment of our mission, and therefore we extend the hand of fellowship to all who operate with us in the establishment of the reign of truth and righteousness among men.

7. We reassert the doctrine of Judaism that the soul is immortal, grounding this belief on the divine nature of the human spirit, which forever finds bliss in righteousness and misery in wickedness. We reject as ideas not rooted in Judaism, the beliefs both in bodily resurrection and in Gehenna and Eden (Hell and Paradise) as abodes for everlasting punishment and reward.

8. In full accordance with the spirit of Mosaic legislation, which strives to regulate the relation between rich and poor, we deem it our duty to participate in the great task of modern times, to solve, on the basis of justice and righteousness, the problems presented by the contrasts and evils of the present organization of society.



SOLOMON SCHECHTER

The Charter of the Seminary

Let me say a few words about the general religious tendency this Seminary will follow. I am not unaware that this is a very delicate point, and prudence would dictate silence or evasion. But life would hardly be worth living without occasional blundering, "the only relief from dull correctness." Besides, if there be in American history one fact more clearly proved than any other it is that "know-nothing-ism" was an absolute and miserable failure. I must not fall into the same error. And thus, sincerely asking forgiveness of all my dearest friends and dearest enemies with whom it may be my misfortune to differ, I declare, in all humility, but most emphatically, that I do know something. And this is that the religion

From Solomon Schechter, "The Charter of the Seminary," in *Tradition and Change: The Development of Conservative Judaism*, edited by Mordecai Waxman (New York: Burning Bush Press, 1958), pp. 102-104. Reprinted with permission.

in which the Jewish ministry should be trained must be specifically and purely Jewish, without any alloy or adulteration. Judaism must stand or fall by that which distinguishes it from other religions as well as by that which it has in common with them. Judaism is not a religion which does not oppose itself to anything in particular. Judaism is opposed to any number of things, and says distinctly "thou shalt not." It permeates the whole of your life. It demands control over all your actions, and interferes even with your menu. It sanctifies the seasons, and regulates your history, both in the past and in the future. Above all, it teaches that disobedience is the strength of sin. It insists upon the observance both of the spirit and of the letter; spirit without letter belongs to the species known to the mystics as "nude souls" wandering about in the universe without balance and without consistency, the play of all possible currents and changes in the atmosphere. In a word Judaism is absolutely incompatible with the abandonment of the Torah. Nay, the very prophet or seer must bring his imprimatur from the Torah. The assertion that the destruction of the Law is its fulfillment is a mere paradox, and recalls strongly the doctrines of Sir Boyle Roche, "the inimitable maker of Irish bulls." He declared emphatically that he "would give up a part, and, if necessary, the whole of the constitution, to preserve the remainder!"

President Abraham Lincoln, the wisest and greatest of rulers, addressed Congress on some occasion of great emergency with the words: "Fellow citizens, we cannot escape history." Nor can we, my friends. The past, with its long chain of events, with its woes and joy, with its tragedies and romances; with its customs and usages, and above all; with its bequest of the Torah, the great entail of the children of Israel, has become an integral and inalienable part of ourselves, bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. We must make an end to these constant amputations if we do not wish to see the body of "Israel" bleed to death before our very eyes. We must leave off talking about Occidentalizing our religion—as if the occident has ever shown the least genius for religion—or freeing the conscience by abolishing various laws. These, and similar platitudes and stock phrases borrowed from Christian apologetics, must be abandoned entirely, if we do not want to drift slowly but surely into Paulinism, which entered the world as the deadliest enemy of Judaism, pursued it through all its course and is still finding its abettors among us, working for their own destruction. Lord, forgive them, for they know nothing. Those who are entrusted with carrying out the purpose of this institution, which, as you have seen, aims at the perpetuation of the tenets of the Jewish religion, both pupils and masters, must faithfully and manfully maintain their loyalty to the Torah. There is

no other Jewish religion but that taught by the Torah and confirmed by history and tradition, and sunk into the conscience of Catholic Israel.

I have just hinted at the desirability of masters and pupils working for one common end. You must not think that our intention is to convert this school of learning into a drill ground where young men will be forced into a certain groove of thinking, or, rather, not thinking; and after being equipped with a few devotional texts, and supplied with certain catchwords, will be let loose upon an unsuspecting public to proclaim their own virtues and the infallibility of their masters. Nothing is further from our thoughts. I once heard a friend of mine exclaim angrily to a pupil: "Sir, how dare you always agree with me?" I do not even profess to agree with myself always, and I would consider my work, to which, with the help of God, I am going to devote the rest of my life, a complete failure if this institution would not in the future produce such extremes as on the one side a raving mystic who would denounce me as a sober Philistine; on the other side, an advanced critic, who would rail at me as a narrow-minded fanatic, while a third devotee of strict orthodoxy would raise protest against any critical views I may entertain. "We take," says Montaigne, "other men's knowledge on trust, which is idle and superficial learning. We must make it our own." The Rabbis express the same thought with allusion to Ps. 1:2 which they explain to mean that what is first at the initiation of man into the Law—God's Torah, becomes, after a sufficient study man's own Torah. Nay, God even deigns to descend to man's own level so as not to interfere with his individuality and powers of conception. I reproduce in paraphrase a passage from a Midrash: "Behold now how the voice of Sinai goes forth to all in Israel attuned to the capacity of each; appealing to the sages according to their wisdom: to the virile according to their strength; to the young according to their aspiring youthfulness, and the children and babes according to their innocence; aye, even to the women according to their motherhood." All that I plead for is that the voice should come from Sinai, not from Golgotha; that it should be the voice of Jacob, not of Esau. The Torah gave spiritual accommodation for thousands of years to all sorts and conditions of men, sages, philosophers, scholars, mystics, casuists, schoolmen and skeptics; and it should also prove broad enough to harbor the different minds of the present century. Any attempt to place the centre of gravity outside of the Torah must end in disaster. We must not flatter ourselves that we shall be allowed to land somewhere midway, say in some Omar Khayyam cult or in some Positivists' society or in some other agnostic makeshift. No, my friends, there are laws of gravitation in the spiritual as there are in the physical

world; we cannot create halting places at will. We must either remain faithful to history or go the way of all flesh, and join the great majority. The teaching in the Seminary will be in keeping with this spirit, and thus largely confined to the exposition and elucidation of historical Judaism in its various manifestations.

10.5.2 Zionism

Before the nineteenth century, anti-Jewish feelings were largely based on Christian religious prejudices. The Jews were the “unbelievers” who had crucified the Christ. This religious anti-Semitism led to sporadic persecutions and expulsions along with severe economic and personal restrictions. After emancipation, anti-Semitism became racially motivated as demagogues and reactionary governments blamed the Jews for political and economic problems. Pseudoscientific theories of “Aryan” superiority and spurious documents like the “Protocols of the Wise Men of Zion” purporting to outline a Jewish plan for world domination fed a growing willingness on the part of many people to blame their troubles on the Jews.

As wave after wave of anti-Semitism washed across Europe, people began to talk about and debate “the Jewish question”: What should be done with the Jews? Fueled by Christian prejudices, resentment, and greed, the gentile world posed an ever greater threat to the Jews. Many Jews became alarmed. Perhaps emancipation and **assimilation** would not protect them from the hate and danger.

Theodor Herzl (1860–1904) was a secularized Jew. He trained as a lawyer and eventually became a correspondent for a Vienna newspaper. Alarmed by the growing incidents of anti-Semitism, he decided that only a Jewish state, a land where Jews could live together and govern each other, provided a safe haven. If such a land could be found and if Jews would immigrate there, they would be free from the dangers of a growing European anti-Semitism.

In 1896 Herzl wrote *Der Judenstaat* (*The Jewish State*), which has become the classic expression of the Zionist cause. That cause stirred great controversy among Jews and non-Jews alike. Some religious Jews opposed **Zionism** because the state Herzl had in mind would be a secular state and, if located in Palestine, heresy to the Orthodox who believed the Jews should return to their beloved land of Zion only when the Messiah came. Many secular Jews were uncertain about leaving countries and cultures with which they identified.



THEODOR HERZL

The Jewish State

READING QUESTIONS

1. Why is Herzl proposing a Jewish state?
2. Why does he think assimilation will not solve “the Jewish question”?
3. Why does Herzl argue that the new Jewish state should not be a theocracy?

PREFACE

The idea which I have developed in this pamphlet is a very old one: it is the restoration of the Jewish State.

The world resounds with outcries against the Jews, and these outcries have awakened the slumbering idea. . . .

The present scheme . . . includes the employment of an existent propelling force. In consideration of my own inadequacy, I shall content myself with indicating the cogs and wheels of the machine to be constructed, and I shall rely on more skilled mechanics than myself to put them together.

Everything depends on our propelling force. And what is that force? The misery of the Jews. . . .

The Jewish question still exists. It would be foolish to deny it. It is a remnant of the Middle Ages, which civilized nations do not even yet seem able to shake off, try as they will. They certainly showed a generous desire to do so when they emancipated us. The Jewish question exists wherever Jews live in perceptible numbers. Where it does not exist, it is carried by Jews in the course of their migrations. We naturally move to those places where we are not persecuted, and there our presence produces persecution. This is the case in every country, and will remain so, even in those highly civilized—for instance, France—until the Jewish question finds a solution on a political basis. The unfortunate Jews are now carrying the seeds of Anti-Semitism into England; they have already introduced it into America.

I believe that I understand Anti-Semitism, which is really a highly complex movement. I consider it from a

From Theodor Herzl, *The Jewish State: An Attempt at a Modern Solution of the Jewish Question* (New York: American Zionist Council, 1946), pp. 69, 70, 75–78, 82–83, 92–95, 146–147, 153, 156–157.

Jewish standpoint, yet without fear or hatred. I believe that I can see what elements there are in it of vulgar sport, of common trade jealousy, of inherited prejudice, of religious intolerance and also of pretended self-defence. I think the Jewish question is no more a social than a religious one, notwithstanding that it sometimes takes these and other forms. It is a national question, which can only be solved by making it a political world-question to be discussed and settled by the civilized nations of the world in council.

We are a people—one people.

We have honestly endeavored everywhere to merge ourselves in the social life of surrounding communities and to preserve the faith of our fathers. We are not permitted to do so. In vain are we loyal patriots, our loyalty in some places running to extremes; in vain do we make the same sacrifices of life and property as our fellow citizens; in vain do we strive to increase the fame of our native land in science and art, or our wealth by trade and commerce. In countries where we have lived for centuries we are still cried down as strangers, and often by those whose ancestors were not yet domiciled in the land where Jews had already had experience of suffering. . . .

Oppression and persecution cannot exterminate us. No nation on earth has survived such struggles and sufferings as we have gone through. Jew-baiting has merely stripped off our weaklings; the strong among us were invariably true to their race when persecution broke out against them. . . .

Assimilation, by which I understand not only external conformity in dress, habits, custom, and language but also identity of feeling and manner—assimilation of Jews could be effected only by intermarriage. But the need for mixed marriages would have to be felt by the majority; their mere recognition by law would certainly not suffice. . . .

Those who really wished to see the Jews disappear through intermixture with other nations, can only hope to see it come about in one way. The Jews must previously acquire economic power sufficiently great to overcome the old social prejudice against them. The aristocracy may serve as an example of this, for in its ranks occur the proportionately largest numbers of mixed marriages. The Jewish families which regild the old nobility with their money become gradually absorbed. But what form would this phenomenon assume in the middle classes, where (the Jews being a bourgeois people) the Jewish question is mainly concentrated? A previous acquisition of power could be synonymous with that economic supremacy which they are already erroneously declared to possess. And if the power they now possess creates rage and indignation among the Anti-Semites, what outbreaks would such an increase of power create?

Hence the first step towards absorption will never be taken, because this step would involve the subjection of the majority to a hitherto scorned minority, possessing neither military nor administrative power of its own. I think, therefore, that the absorption of Jews by means of their prosperity is unlikely to occur. . . .

No human being is wealthy or powerful enough to transplant a nation from one habitation to another. An idea alone can achieve that: and this idea of a State may have the requisite power to do so. The Jews have dreamt this kingly dream all through the long nights of their history. "Next year in Jerusalem" is our old phrase. It is now a question of showing that the dream can be converted into a living reality.

For this, many old, outgrown, confused and limited notions must first be entirely erased from the minds of men. Dull brains might, for instance, imagine that this exodus would be from civilized regions into the desert. That is not the case. It will be carried out in the midst of civilization. We shall not revert to a lower stage, we shall rise to a higher one. We shall not dwell in mud huts; we shall build new more beautiful and more modern houses, and possess them in safety. We shall not lose our acquired possessions; we shall realize them. We shall surrender our well earned rights only for better ones. We shall not sacrifice our beloved customs; we shall find them again. We shall not leave our old home before the new one is prepared for us. Those only will depart who are sure thereby to improve their position; those who are now desperate will go first, after them the poor; next the prosperous, and, last of all, the wealthy. Those who go in advance will raise themselves to a higher grade, equal to that whose representatives will shortly follow. Thus the exodus will be at the same time an ascent of the class.

The departure of the Jews will involve no economic disturbances, no crises, no persecutions; in fact, the countries they abandon will revive to a new period of prosperity. There will be an inner migration of Christian citizens into the positions evacuated by Jews. The outgoing current will be gradual, without any disturbance, and its initial movement will put an end to Anti-Semitism. The Jews will leave as honored friends, and if some of them return, they will receive the same favorable welcome and treatment at the hands of civilized nations as is accorded to all foreign visitors. Their exodus will have no resemblance to a flight, for it will be a well-regulated movement under control of public opinion. The movement will not only be inaugurated with absolute conformity to law, but it cannot even be carried out without the friendly cooperation of interested Governments, who would derive considerable benefits from it.

Security for the integrity of the idea and the vigor of its execution will be found in the creation of a body cor-

porate, or corporation. This corporation will be called "The Society of Jews." In addition to it there will be a Jewish company, an economically productive body.

An individual who attempted even to undertake this huge task alone, would be either an impostor or a madman. The personal character of the members of the corporation will guarantee its integrity, and the adequate capital of the Company will prove its stability. . . .

THE PLAN

The whole plan is in its essence perfectly simple, as it must necessarily be if it is to come within the comprehension of all.

Let the sovereignty be granted us over a portion of the globe large enough to satisfy the rightful requirements of a nation; the rest we shall manage for ourselves. . . .

The plan, simple in design, but complicated in execution, will be carried out by two agencies: The Society of Jews and the Jewish Company.

The Society of Jews will do the preparatory work in the domains of science and politics, which the Jewish Company will afterwards apply practically.

The Jewish Company will be the liquidating agent of the business interests of departing Jews, and will organize commerce and trade in the new country. . . .

Those Jews who agree with our idea of a State will attach themselves to the Society, which will thereby be authorized to confer and treat with Governments in the name of our people. The Society will thus be acknowledged in its relations with Governments as a State-creating power. This acknowledgment will practically create the State. . . .

PALESTINE OR ARGENTINE?

Shall we choose Palestine or Argentine? We shall take what is given us, and what is selected by Jewish public opinion. The Society will determine both these points. . . .

THEOCRACY

Shall we end by having a theocracy? No, indeed. Faith unites us, knowledge gives us freedom. We shall therefore prevent any theocratic tendencies from coming to the fore on the part of our priesthood. We shall keep our priests within the confines of their temples in the

same way as we shall keep our professional army within the confines of their barracks. Army and priesthood shall receive honors high as their valuable functions deserve. But they must not interfere in the administration of the State which confers distinction upon them, else they will conjure up difficulties without and within.

Every man will be as free and undisturbed in his faith or his disbelief as he is in his nationality. And if it should occur that men of other creeds and different nationalities come to live amongst us, we should accord them honorable protection and equality before the law. We have learnt toleration in Europe. This is not sarcastically said; for the Anti-Semitism of today could only in a very few places be taken for old religious intolerance. It is for the most part a movement among civilized nations by which they try to chase away the spectres of their own past.

CONCLUSION

How much has been left unexplained, how many defects, how many harmful superficialities, and how many useless repetitions in this pamphlet, which I have thought over so long and so often revised!

But a fair-minded reader, who has sufficient understanding to grasp the spirit of my words, will not be repelled by these defects. He will rather be roused thereby to cooperate with his intelligence and energy in a work which is not one man's task alone, and to improve it. . . .

Here it is, fellow Jews! Neither fable nor deception! Every man may test its reality for himself, for every man will carry over with him a portion of the Promised Land—one in his head, another in his arms, another in his acquired possessions. . . .

But we must first bring enlightenment to men's minds. The idea must make its way into the most distant, miserable holes where our people dwell. They will awaken from gloomy brooding, for into their lives will come a new significance. Every man need think only of himself, and the movement will assume vast proportions.

And what glory awaits those who fight unselfishly for the cause!

Therefore I believe that a wondrous generation of Jews will spring into existence. The Maccabeans will rise again.

Let me repeat once more my opening words: The Jews who wish for a State will have it.

We shall live at last as free men on our own soil, and die peacefully in our own home.

The world will be freed by our liberty, enriched by our wealth, magnified by our greatness.

And whatever we attempt there to accomplish for our own welfare, will react powerfully and beneficially for the good of humanity.

10.5.3 Judaism As a Life of Dialogue

Martin Buber (1878–1965) was a Jewish educator and philosopher whose book *Ich und Du* (*I and Thou*, 1923) combined in creative ways the spiritual depth of Hasidism with existential philosophy. Buber argued that open, nonmanipulative, personal, and mutually affirming dialogue not only improves relationships but also reveals God, the “Eternal Thou.” These “I-Thou” relationships Buber contrasted with “I-It” relationships that treat others as objects, create alienation, depersonalize the world and people, and conceal rather than reveal the sacred quality of living.

Buber’s philosophy stems, in part, from a deep appreciation of Judaism and its history as a dialogue between humans and God. When arguments about the dual Torah rage, when mystics dance in ecstasy, when people try to make sense of exile, suffering, and grief, when they seek reform, and when they seek to restore a lost tradition in all of its purity—these kinds of things are part of a dialogue between heaven and earth.

In 1938 Buber left Germany and immigrated to Palestine where he advocated Jewish-Arab rapprochement. It was a dialogue that has started and stopped over and over again in the midst of war and the threats of war.

MARTIN BUBER

The Dialogue Between Heaven and Earth

READING QUESTIONS

1. What are the first and the second biblical axioms?
2. How, according to Buber, can humans be free in the face of God’s foresight and predetermination?

From *On Judaism*, by Martin Buber, pp. 214–225. Copyright © 1967 by Schocken Books, Inc. Reprinted by permission of Schocken Books, distributed by Pantheon Books, a division of Random House, Inc. Notes omitted.

3. How does Buber respond to the question “How is a Jewish life still possible after Auschwitz?”

I

The most important of all that the biblical view of existence has opened up for all times is clearly recognized by a comparison of Israel’s Holy Writ with those holy books of the nations that originated independently of it. None of those books is, like it, full of a dialogue between heaven and earth. It tells us how again and again God addresses man and is addressed by him. God announces to man what plan He has for the world; as the earliest of the “literary” prophets puts it (Amos 4: 13), God lets him know “his soliloquy.” He discloses to him His will and calls upon him to take part in its realization. But man is no blind tool; he was created as a free being—free also vis-à-vis God, free to surrender to Him or to refuse himself to Him. To God’s sovereign address, man gives his autonomous answer; if he remains silent, his silence, too, is an answer. Very often we hear God’s voice alone, as in much of the books of the prophets, where only in isolated cases—in certain accounts of visions, or in the diary-like records of Jeremiah—does the prophet’s reply become articulate, and sometimes these records actually assume a dialogic form. But even in all those passages where God alone speaks, we are made to feel that the person addressed by Him answers with his wordless soul, that is to say, that he stands in the dialogic situation. And again, very often we hear the voice of man alone, as generally in the Psalms, where only in isolated cases the worshipper indicates the divine reply; but here, too, the dialogic situation is apparent: it is apparent to us that man, lamenting, suppliant, thanks-giving, praise-singing man, experiences himself as heard and understood, accepted and confirmed, by Him to whom he addresses himself. The basic teaching that fills the Hebrew Bible is that our life is a dialogue between the above and the below.

But does this still apply to our present-day life? Believers and unbelievers deny it. A view common among believers is that though everything contained in Scripture is literally true, though God did certainly speak to the men chosen by Him, yet, since then, the holy spirit has been taken from us; heaven is silent to us, and only through the books of the written and oral tradition is God’s will made known to us as to what we shall do or not do. Certainly, even today, the worshipper stands immediately before his Creator, but how could he dare, like the Psalmist, to report to the world words of personal reply, of personal granting, as spoken immediately

to him? And as for the unbelievers, it goes without saying that the atheists need not be mentioned at all, but only the adherents of a more or less philosophic God-concept, with which they cannot reconcile the idea of God's addressing and being addressed by man; to them, the entire dialogics of Scripture is nothing but a mythical figment, instructive from the point of view of the history of the human mind, but inapplicable to our life.

As against either opinion, a faithful and unbiased reader of Scripture must endorse the view he has learned from it: what happened once happens now and always, and the fact of its happening to us is a guarantee of its having happened. The Bible has, in the form of a glorified remembrance, given vivid, decisive expression to an ever recurrent happening. In the infinite language of events and situations, eternally changing, but plain to the truly attentive, transcendence speaks to our hearts at the essential moments of personal life. And there is a language in which we can answer it; it is the language of our actions and attitudes, our reactions and our abstentions. The totality of these responses is what we may call our responsibility in the proper sense of the word. This fundamental interpretation of our existence we owe to the Hebrew Bible; and whenever we truly read it, our self-understanding is renewed and deepened.

II

But in Scripture, not only the individual but the community too is addressed from above, in such a manner as is found in no other of the holy books of mankind.

Here the people, as a people, confronts God and receives, as a people, His never ceasing instruction. It, too, like the individual, is called upon to participate in the realization of the divine will on earth. Just as the individual is to hallow himself in his personal life, the people is to hallow itself in its communal life; it is to become a "holy people." Like the individual, it is free in its answer to the divine call, free to say yes or no to God by its doing and its not doing. The people is not a sum of individuals addressed by God; it is something existing beyond that, something essential and irreplaceable, meant by God as such, claimed by Him as such, and answerable to Him as such. God leads it and requires it to follow His sole leadership. He has created not only man as an individual, men as individuals, but also the human peoples; and He uses them, like the former, for His purpose, for the completion of His world-creation. He takes care of them in their history; not only Israel but all peoples are, as the prophet proclaims, led by Him to

freedom when enslaved by other peoples, and in freedom they shall serve Him, as peoples, each in its own way and according to its own character. Though He reprimands Israel with especial severity because, contrary to its mandate, it has not fulfilled divine justice in the life of the community, yet He reprimands the other peoples as well, because they, who are also His children, do not act toward each other as brothers should. Some day, however, so the prophecy runs, the representatives of all of them will crowd around Mount Moriah and there, as Israel once did, alone, at Mount Sinai, receive that divine instruction on the great peace between the peoples (Isaiah 2). "The noble ones of the peoples are gathered together," so the Psalmist says, "as the people of the God of Abraham" (Psalm 47:10)—of Abraham, who is called "the father of a multitude of nations" (Genesis 17:5), a description meaning more than genealogy. Since world history is the advance of the peoples toward this goal, it is, essentially, sacred history.

This is also why in Scripture the divine voice addresses man not as an isolated individual but always as an individual member of the people. Even before there is a people of Israel, its father-to-be, Abraham, is addressed as such: he is to become "a blessing" in his seed. And in the legislation, both in the Decalogue and in the injunctions supplementing it, God again and again addresses Himself to a "thou" that is certainly the "thou" of each individual in each generation of the people, but as he is conceived in his connection with the people, at whose communal life that legislation is aimed, so that everyone, when a commandment conveys to him the will of God with regard to his own life, conceives himself as the individual condensation of the people. This basic view unfolds itself up to the highest level of human existence: "Thou art My servant, the Israel in whom I will be glorified," says God (Isaiah 49:3) to His elect; the man who fulfills the mandate given to the people embodies the truth of the people's existence.

From this vantage point, modern life, both of peoples and of persons, is judged and sentence passed. This life is split in two: what is thought reprehensible in the relations between persons is thought commendable in the relations between peoples. This is contrary to the prophetic demand: the prophet accuses a people of sinning against another people because it "remembered not the brotherly covenant" (Amos 1:9). But that split naturally continues into the life of modern man as an individual: his existence is divided into a private and a public one, which are governed by very different laws. What he disapproves, in his fellow man and in himself, in the former sphere, he approves, in his fellow man and in himself, in the latter: lying degrades the private person, but it well befits the political partisan, provided that it

is practiced skillfully and successfully. This duality of moral values is intolerable from the point of view of biblical faith: here, deceit is under all circumstances regarded as disgraceful (also, e.g., in the case of the patriarchs, as we see from the prophetic criticism of Jacob and from some other indications), even if it is prompted by a desire to promote the cause of justice; in fact, in the latter case, it is the more pernicious, since it poisons and disintegrates the good that it is supposed to serve.

If the first biblical axiom is: "Man is addressed by God in his life," the second is: "The life of man is meant by God as a unit."

III

As we have seen, in the biblical conception of existence God addresses the human person and the human people with a view to what shall be, what shall be realized through this person, through this people. This means that man is placed in freedom and that every hour in which he, in his current situation, feels himself to be addressed is an hour of genuine decision. In the first instance, of course, he decides only upon his own behavior, but by doing so he participates, in a measure that he is neither able nor authorized to determine, in the decision upon what the next hour will be like, and through this upon what the future generally will be like.

It is from here that the great biblical phenomenon of prophecy must be understood. The essential task of the prophets of Israel was not to foretell an already determined future, but to confront man and people in Israel, at each given moment, with the alternative that corresponded to the situation. It was announced not what would happen under any circumstances, but what would happen if the hearers of the message realized God's will, and what would happen if they refused themselves to its realization. The divine voice chose the prophet, as it were, for its "mouth," in order to bring home to man again and again, in the most immediate fashion, his freedom and its consequences. Even when the prophet did not speak in alternative form, but announced unconditionally that after such and such a time the catastrophe would happen, this announcement—as we learn from the paradigmatic Book of Jonah—nevertheless contained a hidden alternative: the people is driven into despair, but in precisely this state kindles the spark of "turning": the people turns to God—and is saved [sic]. By an extreme threat to existence, man is stirred to the depths of his soul and brought to a radical decision for

God, but his decision is at the same time a fateful decision in the strictest sense.

Post-biblical thinkers have pondered how the freedom of the human will and the resultant indeterminateness of the future can be reconciled with divine foresight and predetermination. Outstanding among all that has been said in the effort to overcome this contradiction is the well-known saying of Akiba's, "All is foreseen, yet the power is given," whose meaning is that to God, who sees them together, the times do not appear in succession but in progressless eternity, while in the progression of times in which man lives freedom reigns, at any given time, in the concrete moment of decision; beyond that, human wisdom has not attained. In the Bible itself there is no pondering; it does not deal with the essence of God but with His manifestation to mankind. The reality of which it treats is that of the human world, and in it the immutable truth of decision applies.

For guilty man this means the decision to turn from his wrong way to the way of God. We see most clearly what this means in the biblical view that our responsibility is essentially our answering to a divine address. The two great examples are Cain and David. Both have murdered (for so the Bible understands also David's deed, since it has God's messenger say to him that he "slew Uriah the Hittite with the sword") and both are called to account by God. Cain attempts evasion: "Am I my brother's keeper?" He is the man who shuns the dialogue with God. Not so David. He answers: "I have sinned against the Lord." This is the true answer: whomever one becomes guilty against, in truth one becomes guilty against God. David is the man who acknowledges the relations between God and himself, from which his responsibility arises, and realizes that he has betrayed it.

The Hebrew Bible is concerned with the terrible and at the same time merciful fact of the *immediacy* between God and ourselves. Even in the dark hour after he has become guilty against his brother, man is not abandoned to the forces of chaos. God Himself seeks him out, and even when He comes to call him to account, His coming is salvation.

IV

But there is, in the biblical view, a third, widest sphere of divine utterance. God speaks not only to the individual and to the community, within the limits and under the conditions of a particular biographical or historical situation. Everything, being and becoming, nature

and history, is essentially a divine pronouncement (*Aussprache*), an infinite context of signs meant to be perceived and understood by perceiving and understanding creatures.

But here a fundamental difference exists between nature and human history. Nature, as a whole and in all its elements, enunciates something that may be regarded as a self-communication of God to all those ready to receive it. This is what the psalm means that has heaven and earth "declare," wordlessly, the glory of God. Not so human history—not only because mankind, being placed in freedom, cooperates incessantly in shaping its course, but quite especially because, in nature, it is God the Creator who speaks, and His creative act is never interrupted; in history, on the other hand, it is the revealing God who speaks, and revelation is essentially not a continuous process, but breaks in again and again upon the course of events and irradiates it. Nature is full of God's utterance, if one but hears it, but what is said here is always that one, though all-inclusive, something, that which the psalm calls the glory of God; in history, however, times of great utterance, when the mark of divine direction is recognizable in the conjunction of events, alternate with, as it were, mute times, when everything that occurs in the human world and pretends to historical significance appears to us as empty of God, with nowhere a beckoning of His finger, nowhere a sign that He is present and acts upon this our historical hour. In such times it is difficult for the individual, and more so for the people, to understand oneself to be addressed by God; the experience of concrete responsibility recedes more and more, because, in the seemingly God-forsaken space of history, man unlearns taking the relationship between God and himself seriously in the dialogic sense.

In an hour when the exiles in Babylon perceived God's passage through world history, in the hour when Cyrus was about to release them and send them home, the anonymous Prophet of the Exile, who like none before him felt called upon to interpret the history of peoples, in one of his pamphlets made God say to Israel: "From the beginning I have not spoken in secret" (Isaiah 48:16). God's utterance in history is unconcealed, for it is intended to be heard by the peoples. But Isaiah, to whose book the pronouncements of the anonymous prophet have been attached, not only speaks of a time when God "hideth His face from the house of Jacob" (8:17), but he also knows (28:21) that there are times when we are unable to recognize and acknowledge God's own deeds in history as His deeds, so uncanny and "barbarous" do they seem to us. And the same chapter of the Prophet of the Exile, in which God says, "Ask Me of the things to come" (45:11), states that in the hour of

the liberation of peoples the masses whom Egypt put to forced labor and Ethiopia sold as slaves will immediately, with the chains of serfdom still on their bodies, as it were, turn to God, throw themselves down, and pray: "Verily Thou art a God that hideth Himself, O God of Israel, Savior!" (45:15). During the long periods of enslavement it seemed to them as though there were nothing divine any more and the world were irretrievably abandoned to the forces of tyranny; only now do they recognize that there is a Savior, and that He is one—the Lord of History. And now they know and profess. He is a God that hides himself, or more exactly, the God that hides Himself and reveals Himself.

The Bible knows of God's hiding His face, of times when the contact between heaven and earth seems to be interrupted. God seems to withdraw Himself utterly from the earth and no longer to participate in its existence. The space of history is then full of noise, but empty of the divine breath. For one who believes in the living God, who knows about Him, and is fated to spend his life in a time of His hiddenness, it is very difficult to live.

There is a psalm, the 82nd, in which life in a time of God's hiddenness is described in a picture of startling cruelty. It is assumed that God has entrusted the government of mankind to a host of angels and commanded them to realize justice on earth and to protect the weak, the poor, and the helpless from the encroachments of the wrongdoers. But they "judge unjustly" and "respect the persons of the wicked." Now the Psalmist envisions how God draws the unfaithful angels before His seat, judges them, and passes sentence upon them: they are to become mortal. But the Psalmist awakes from his vision and looks about him: iniquity still reigns on earth with unlimited power. And he cries to God: "Arise, O God, judge the earth!"

This cry is to be understood as a late, but even more powerful, echo of that bold speech of the patriarch arguing with God: "The judge of all the earth, will He not do justice?" It reinforces and augments that speech; its implication is: Will He allow injustice to reign further? And so the cry transmitted to us by Scripture becomes our own cry, which bursts from our hearts and rises to our lips in a time of God's hiddenness. For this is what the biblical word does to us: it confronts us with the human address as one that in spite of everything is heard and in spite of everything may expect an answer.

In this our own time, one asks again and again: how is a Jewish life still possible after Auschwitz? I would like to frame this question more correctly: how is a life with God still possible in a time in which there is an Auschwitz? The estrangement has become too cruel, the hid-

denness too deep. One can still “believe” in the God who allowed those things to happen, but can one still speak to Him? Can one still hear His word? Can one still, as an individual and as a people, enter at all into a dialogic relationship with Him? Can one still call to Him? Dare we recommend to the survivors of Auschwitz, the Job of the gas chambers: “Give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good; for His mercy endureth forever”?

But how about Job himself? He not only laments, but he charges that the "cruel" God (30:21) has "removed his right" from him (27:2) and thus that the judge of all the earth acts against justice. And he receives an answer from God. But what God says to him does not answer the charge; it does not even touch upon it. The true answer that Job receives is God's appearance only, only this that distance turns into nearness, that "his eye sees Him" (42:5), that he knows Him again. Nothing is explained, nothing adjusted; wrong has not become right, nor cruelty kindness. Nothing has happened but that man again hears God's address.

The mystery has remained unsolved, but it has become his, it has become man's.

And we?

We—by that is meant all those who have not got over what happened and will not get over it. How is it with us? Do we stand overcome before the hidden face of God like the tragic hero of the Greeks before faceless fate? No, rather even now we contend, we too, with God, even with Him, the Lord of Being, whom we once, we here, chose for our Lord. We do not put up with earthly being; we struggle for its redemption, and struggling we appeal to the help of our Lord, who is again and still a hiding one. In such a state we await His voice, whether it comes out of the storm or out of a stillness that follows it. Though His coming appearance resemble no earlier one, we shall recognize again our cruel and merciful Lord.

CONTEMPORARY SCHOLARSHIP

I have not selected the typical historical or sociological scholarly studies of Judaism for this section. The essays I have selected are written by scholars, but they