

no strange gods before me," corresponds to the seventh: "Thou shalt not commit adultery," for conjugal faithlessness is as grave a sin as idolatry, which is faithlessness to God. The third commandment: "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord in vain," corresponds to the eighth: "Thou shalt not steal," for theft leads to false oath. The fourth commandment: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy," corresponds to the ninth: "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor," for he who bears false witness against his neighbor commits as grave a sin as if he had borne false witness against God, saying that He had not created the world in six days and rested on the seventh, the Sabbath. The fifth commandment: "Honor thy father and thy mother," corresponds to the tenth: "Covet not thy neighbor's wife," for one who indulges this lust produces children who will not honor their true father, but will consider a stranger their father.

The Ten Commandments, which God first revealed on Mount Sinai, correspond in their character to the ten words of which He had made use at the creation of the world. The first commandment: "I am the Lord, thy God," corresponds to the first word at the creation: "Let there be light," for God is the eternal light. The second commandment: "Thou shalt have no strange gods before me," corresponds to the second word: "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters." For God said: "Choose between Me and the idols; between Me, the fountain of living waters, and the idols, the stagnant waters." The third commandment: "Thou shalt not take the name of thy God in vain," corresponds to the word: "Let the waters be gathered together," for as little as water can be gathered in a cracked vessel, so can a man maintain his possession which he has obtained through false oaths. The fourth commandment: "Remember to keep the Sabbath holy," corresponds to the word: "Let the earth bring forth grass," for he who truly observes the Sabbath will receive good things from God without having to labor for them, just as the earth produces grass that need not be sown. For at the creation of man it was God's intention that he be free from sin, immortal, and capable of supporting himself by the products of the soil without toil. The fifth commandment: "Honor thy father and thy mother," corresponds to the word: "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven," for God said to man: "I gave thee two lights, thy father and thy mother, treat them with care." The sixth commandment: "Thou shalt not kill," corresponds to the word: "Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature," for God said: "Be not like the fish, among whom the great swallow the small." The seventh commandment: "Thou shalt not commit adultery," corresponds to the word: "Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind," for God said: "I chose for thee a spouse, abide with her." The eighth commandment: "Thou shalt not steal," corresponds to the word: "Behold, I have given you every herb-bearing seed," for none, said God, should touch his neighbor's goods, but only that which grows free as the grass, which is the common property of all. The ninth commandment: "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor," corresponds to the word: "Let us make man in our image." Thou, like thy neighbor, art made in My image, hence bear not false witness

against thy neighbor. The tenth commandment: "Thou shalt not covet the wife of thy neighbor," corresponds to the tenth word of the creation: "It is not good for man to be alone," for God said: "I created thee a spouse, and let not one among ye covet his neighbor's wife."

Source: Louis Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, vol. 3, ch. 2 (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1909).

MEDIEVAL JUDAISM

THIRTEEN PRINCIPLES OF FAITH: MAIMONIDES

Judaism has resisted the formulation of creeds or other statements of belief, perhaps in part because of the dialogical nature of the Talmud and its other principal theological works. Nevertheless, the medieval Jewish philosopher Maimonides (1135–1204) developed a list of thirteen principles of Jewish faith, which was embraced by Judaism and, in much abbreviated form, appears in most Jewish prayer books today. The following is from Maimonides' original discussion of the principles.

The First Foundation is to believe in the existence of the Creator, blessed be He. This means that there exists a Being that is complete in all ways and He is the cause of all else that exists. He is what sustains their existence and the existence of all that sustains them. It is inconceivable that He would not exist, for if He would not exist then all else would cease to exist as well, nothing would remain. And if we would imagine that everything other than He would cease to exist, this would not cause His, God's, blessed be He, existence to cease or be diminished. Independence and mastery is to Him alone, God, blessed be His Name, for He needs nothing else and is sufficient unto himself. He does not need the existence of anything else. All that exists apart from Him, the angels, the universe and all that is within it, all these things are dependent on Him for their existence. . . .

The Second Foundation is the unity of God, Blessed be His Name. In other words, to believe that this being, which is the cause of all, is one. This does not mean one as in one of a pair nor one like a species [which encompasses many individuals] nor one as in one object that is made up of many elements nor as a single simple object which is infinitely divisible. Rather, He, God, Blessed be His Name, is a unity unlike any other possible unity. . . .

The Third Foundation is that He is not physical. This means to believe that the One whom we have mentioned is not a body and His powers are not physical. The concepts of physical bodies such as movement, rest, or existence in a particular place cannot be applied to Him. Such things cannot be part of His nature nor can they happen to Him. Therefore the Sages of blessed memory stated that the concepts of combination and separation do not apply to Him and they said, "Above there is no sitting nor standing, no separation nor combination." The prophet says, "To whom can you compare Me? To what am I equal? Says the Holy One" (Isaiah 40:25). If He would be a physical body He would be comparable to physical bodies. . . .

The Fourth Foundation is that He is first. This means to believe that the One was the absolute first and everything else in existence is not first relative to Him. There are many proofs to this in the Holy Scriptures. . . .

The Fifth Foundation is that it is proper to serve Him, blessed be He, to ascribe to Him greatness, to make known His greatness, and to fulfill His commandments. We may not do this to any lesser being, whether it be one of the angels, the stars, the celestial spheres, the elements, or anything formed from them. For all these things have predetermined natures and have no authority or control over their actions. Rather, such authority and control is God's. Similarly, it is not proper to serve them as intermediaries in order that they should bring us closer to God. Rather, to God Himself we must direct our thoughts, and abandon anything else. . . .

The Sixth Foundation is prophecy. That is, that a person must know that there exist amongst mankind individuals who have very lofty qualities and great perfection; whose souls are prepared until their minds receive perfect intellect. After this, their human intellect can then become attached to the Active Intellect [i.e., the "mind," so to speak, of God] and have bestowed upon them an exalted state. These are the prophets and this is prophecy. . . .

The Seventh Foundation is the prophecy of Moses our Teacher, may he rest in peace. This means to believe that he is the father of all the prophets, both those that preceded him and those who arose after him; all of them were below his level. He was the chosen one from all of Mankind, for he attained a greater knowledge of the Blessed One, more than any other man ever attained or ever will attain. For he, may he rest in peace, rose up from the level of man to the level of the angels and gained the exalted status of an angel. There did not remain any screen that he did not tear and penetrate; nothing physical held him back. He was devoid of any flaw, big or small. His powers of imagination, the senses, and the perceptions were nullified; the power of desire was separated from him leaving him with pure intellect. It is for this reason that it is said of him that he could speak to God, blessed be He, without the intermediary of angels. . . .

The Eighth Foundation is that the Torah is from Heaven. This means that we must believe that this entire Torah, which was given to us from Moses our Teacher, may he rest in peace, is entirely from the mouth of the Almighty. In other words, that it all was conveyed to him from God, blessed be He, in the manner which is called, for lack of a better term, "speech." It is not known how it was conveyed to him, except to [Moses], may he rest in peace, to whom it was given, and he was like a scribe writing from dictation, and he wrote all the incidents, the stories, and the commandments. Therefore [Moses] is called "scribe" (Numbers 21:18). . . .

The Ninth Foundation is the transcription, meaning that this Torah, and no other, was transcribed from the Creator and we may not add to it or remove from it, not in the Written Torah or in the Oral Torah, as it says, "... you will not add to it, nor diminish from it" (Deuteronomy 13:1). . . .

The Tenth Foundation is that God, blessed be He, knows the actions of mankind and does not turn His eyes from them. . . .

The Eleventh Foundation is that God, blessed be He, gives reward to one who obeys the commandments of the Torah and punishes one who violates its prohibitions. The greatest reward is the World to Come, and the greatest punishment is spiritual excision. . . .

The Twelfth Foundation is the time of the *Messiah*. This means to believe and be certain that he will come, and not to think that he is late in coming, "if it seems slow, wait for it; [because it will surely come, it will not come late]" (Chabakuk 2:3). You should not set a time for him, and you should not make calculations in Scripture to determine the time of his coming. The Sages say, "Let despair come upon those who calculate endtimes." [This foundation further includes] to believe that he [Messiah] will possess advantages, superiority, and honor to a greater degree than all the kings that have ever existed, as was prophesied regarding him by all the prophets, from Moses, peace be upon him, till Malachi, peace be upon him. One who doubts this or who minimizes his greatness denies the Torah that testifies explicitly to [the coming of Messiah] in the account of Balaam (Numbers 24) and in the portion of *Netzavim* (Deuteronomy 30:3-5). Included in this principle is that there is no king to the Jewish people except from the House of David and the seed of Solomon alone. Anyone who disagrees with [the status of] this family denies God and His prophets. . . .

The Thirteenth Foundation is the resurrection of the dead. . . .

Source: Maimonides, *Commentary on the Mishnah*, Sanhedrin, ch. 10, tr. Eliezer C. Abrahamson. Reprinted by permission.

KABBALA: CREATION

Since the twelfth century, the most dominant school of Jewish mysticism has been Kabbala, the classic statement of which is the Book of Splendor (Sefer ha-Zohar), written between 1280 and 1286 by Moses de Leon, a Spanish Jew from Guadalajara. The work emphasizes ten emanations—or Sefirot—of God's personality. These attributes of the divinity permeate all of creation, including our personal lives. De Leon does not systematically discuss the emanations and typically does not refer to them by their formal names. Instead, he relies heavily on metaphors, leaving it to the reader to make the association. The following is de Leon's account of creation, presented as a commentary on the first phrase of the Book of Genesis, that is, "In the beginning." He describes how God (Eyn Sof, or the Infinite) created two primary emanations. The first is Hokhmah (wisdom), described below as "point" and "beginning," which is the primal point of God's emanation. The second is Binah (derivative wisdom), described below as "palace," which is the prime mother who receives seed from Hokhmah and gives birth to seven lower emanations.

"In the beginning" [Gen. 1:1]—when the will of the King began to take effect, he engraved signs into the heavenly sphere [that surrounded him]. Within the most hidden recess a dark flame issued from

the mystery of *eyn sof*, the Infinite, like a fog forming in the unformed—enclosed in the ring of that sphere, neither white nor black, neither red nor green, of no color whatever. Only after this flame began to assume size and dimension, did it produce radiant colors. From the innermost center of the flame sprang forth a well out of which colors issued and spread upon everything beneath, hidden in the mysterious hiddenness of *eyn sof*.

The well broke through and yet did not break through the ether [of the sphere]. It could not be recognized at all until a hidden, supernatural point shone forth under the impact of the final breaking through.

Beyond this point nothing can be known. Therefore it is called *reshit*, beginning—the first word [out of the ten] by means of which the universe has been created. When King Solomon “penetrated into the depths of the nut garden,” as it is written, “I descended into the garden of nuts” [Cant. 6:11], he took up a nut shell and studying it, he saw an analogy in its layers with the spirits which motivate the sensual desires of humans, as it is written, “and the delights of the sons of men [are from] male and female demons” [Eccles. 2:8].

The Holy One, be blessed, saw that it was necessary to put into the world all of these things so as to make sure of permanence, and of having, so to speak, a brain surrounded by numerous membranes. The whole world, upper and lower, is organized on this principle, from the primary mystic center to the very outermost of all the layers. All are coverings, the one to the other, brain within brain, spirit inside of spirit, shell within shell.

The primal center is the innermost light, of translucence, subtlety, and purity beyond comprehension. That inner point extended becomes a “palace” which acts as an enclosure for the center, and is also of a radiance translucent beyond the power to know it.

The “palace” vestment for the incognizable inner point, while it is an unknowable radiance in itself, is nevertheless of a lesser subtlety and translucency than the primal point. The “palace” extends into a vestment for itself, the primal light. From then outward, there is extension upon extension, each constituting a vesture to the one before, as a membrane to the brain. Though membrane first, each extension becomes brain to the next extension.

Likewise does the process go on below; and after this design, man in the world combines brain and membrane, spirit and body, all to the more perfect ordering of the world. When the moon was conjoined with the sun, she was luminous, but when she went apart from the sun and was given governance of her own hosts, her status and her light were reduced, and shell after shell as fashioned for investing the brain, and all was for its good.

Source: Zohar, 1:49b, from *Zohar, The Book of Splendor*, ed. Gershom Scholem (New York: Schocken Books, 1949). Reprinted by permission.

RECENT MOVEMENTS

HASIDISM: THE SEVEN BEGGARS

The Hasidic movement was founded by Baal Shem Tov (1700–1760) as a mystical response to disillusionment with both messianic hope (brought on by messianic pretenders of the previous century) and rabbinic legalism. Followers of Baal Shem Tov were preachers, rather than theologians, and thus communicated orally rather than in writing. Their homilies eventually were put in writing by their sons or disciples. The Hasids describe God pantheistically and maintain that God can be directly accessed.

Another genre of writing also emerged from the Hasidic movement: the tale. These parable-like stories draw from events in peasant life and describe God more anthropomorphically than pantheistically. The most distinguished of these are by Ukrainian Rabbi Nahman of Bratslav (1772–1810). The following selection is from his best-known and most cryptic tale, “The Seven Beggars.” The story surrounds a wedding ceremony that is attended by six deformed beggars, each of whom presents tales explaining his respective deformity (a seventh beggar remained in the forest). Their stories emphasize the illusory nature of the world in which we live.

... Today I present you a wedding gift that you should be as I am. Do you think my neck is twisted? My neck is not twisted at all. In fact, I have a straight neck, a very handsome neck. Only that there are worldly vanities (empty breaths) which are so numerous that I do not want to exhale the last breath. ... But I really have a handsome neck, a wonderful neck because I have such a wonderful voice. I can imitate with my voice every speechless sound. ... And I have an affidavit to that effect from a certain country.

For there is a country where everyone is skilled in the art of music. Everyone practices these arts, even little children. ... The youngest in that country would be the wisest in another country in the art of music. And the wise men, and the king of that country and the musicians are experts in the art of music.

Once, the country's wise men sat and boasted of their expertise in the art of music. One boasted that he could play on one instrument; another, on another; and still another, on all instruments. This one boasted that he could imitate with his voice the sound of one instrument, and another boasted that he could imitate with his voice yet another instrument. ... Another one boasted that with his voice he could make the sound of cannon firing.

I, too, was there, so I declared saying, “My Voice is better than all of yours. And here is the proof. If you are such wise men in music, see if you can save these two countries. There are two countries one thousand miles apart from each other where no one can sleep when night falls. As soon as night falls, everyone begins to wail with such anguish—men, women, and children—because they hear a certain wailing sound of mourning. Stones would melt because of this wail. ... So if you are all so very wise in music, let us see if you can save these two countries, or at least imitate the sounds of the laments heard there.”

And they all arose to go there. They left and reached one of those two countries. When they arrived, and night fell, as usual, everyone began to wail and the wise men also wailed. And so they saw that they were of no help at all to the two countries. And I said to the wise men: "Can you, at least, tell me where the sound of the wailing comes from?" They asked: "Do you know?" And I answered: "Of course I know. There are two birds, a male and a female. There was only one pair of these species on earth. The female was lost and the male roamed about seeking her. She was also seeking him. They searched for each other for such a long time that they lost their ways and realized they could no longer find one another. They remained where they were and made nests. . . . And when night fell, each one of this pair of birds began to lament with a very great wail. Each wailed for its mate. This is the wailing that is heard in these two countries, and because of the sound, everyone must wail and no one can sleep." . . .

The wise man said to me: "and you set it right?" I answered: "Yes, I can set it right, since I can imitate all the sounds of the world. I can also throw my voice, so that in the place from where I throw my voice, nobody hears, but it is heard far, far away. . . ."

But who could believe me? So I led them into a forest. They heard somebody open a door, and shut it, and lock it with a bolt. Then I shot a gun and sent my dog to retrieve what I had shot. And the dog struggled in the snow. These wise men heard it all and looked around, but they saw absolutely nothing. They heard no sound from me . . . so they understood that I could imitate all the sounds and could throw my voice and thus could set everything right.

Source: Selections from "The Seven Beggars," from *Nahman of Bratslav: The Tales* (New York: Paulist Press, 1978), pp. 274-277. Reprinted by permission.

ORTHODOX JUDAISM: SERVICE PRAYER FOR THE DAY OF ATONEMENT

The term Orthodox Judaism was first used in the late seventeenth century to distinguish traditional Judaism from the Reform Judaism movement that modernized many aspects of Jewish theology and ritual. Today Orthodox Judaism is diverse in its belief and practices, and contains divisions such as between modernists and centrists. A common theme within this diversity, though, is adherence to the traditional view that God is the source of the Torah and that the oral law is authoritative. The selection below is from a Jewish prayer book that gained wide acceptance in English-speaking Orthodox Jewish communities. The prayer is specifically earmarked for one of Judaism's most sacred days, Yom Kippur—that is, the Day of Atonement—during which time Jewish people seek God's forgiveness for the wrongs they have committed. Accordingly, the Yom Kippur service prayer enumerates a range of possible sins, requesting God's forgiveness for the commission of each.

May it then be thy will, O Lord our God and God of our fathers, to forgive us for all our sins, to pardon us for all our iniquities, and to grant us remission for all our transgressions.

For the sin which we have committed before thee under compulsion, or of our own will;

And for the sin which we have committed before thee in hardening of the heart;

For the sin which we have committed before thee unknowingly;

And for the sin which we have committed before thee with utterance of the lips;

For the sin which we have committed before thee by unchastity;

And for the sin which we have committed before thee openly and secretly;

For the sin which we have committed before thee knowingly and deceitfully;

And for the sin which we have committed before thee in speech;

For the sin which we have committed before thee by wronging our neighbor;

And for the sin which we have committed before thee by the sinful meditating of the heart;

For the sin which we have committed before thee by association with impurity;

And for the sin which we have committed before thee by confession with the mouth alone;

For the sin which we have committed before thee by despising parents and teachers;

And for the sin which we have committed before thee in presumption or in error;

For the sin which we have committed before thee by violence;

And for the sin which we have committed before thee by the profanation of the divine Name;

For the sin which we have committed before thee by unclean lips;

And for the sin which we have committed before thee by folly of the mouth;

For the sin which we have committed before thee by the evil inclination;

And for the sin which we have committed before thee wittingly or unwittingly;

For all these, O God of forgiveness, forgive us, pardon us, grant us remission.

For the sin which we have committed before thee by denying and lying;

And for the sin which we have committed before thee by taking of bribes;

For the sin which we have committed before thee by scoffing;

And for the sin which we have committed before thee by slander;

For the sin which we have committed before thee in business;

And for the sin which we have committed before thee in eating and drinking;

For the sin which we have committed before thee by usury and interest;

And for the sin which we have committed before thee by the stretched forth neck of pride;

For the sin which we have committed before thee by the conversation of our lips;

And for the sin which we have committed before thee with wanton looks;

For the sin which we have committed before thee with haughty eyes;

And for the sin which we have committed before thee by effrontery;

For all these, O God of forgiveness, forgive us, pardon us, grant us remission.

For the sin which we have committed before thee by breaking off the yoke of thy commandments;

And for the sin which we have committed before thee by contentiousness;

For the sin which we have committed before thee by ensnaring our neighbor;

And for the sin which we have committed before thee by envy;

For the sin which we have committed before thee by levity;

And for the sin which we have committed before thee by being stiff-necked;

For the sin which we have committed before thee by running to do evil;

And for the sin which we have committed before thee by tale-bearing;

For the sin which we have committed before thee by vain oaths;

And for the sin which we have committed before thee by causeless hatred;

For the sin which we have committed before thee by breach of trust;

And for the sin which we have committed before thee with confusion of mind;

For all these, O God of forgiveness, forgive us, pardon us, grant us remission.

And also for the sins for which we owe a burnt offering;

And for the sins for which we owe a sin offering;

And for the sins for which we owe an offering, varying according to our means;

And for the sins for which we owe an offering, whether for certain or for doubtful trespass;

And for the sins for which we are liable to the penalty of chastisement;

And for the sins for which we are liable to the penalty of forty stripes;

And for the sins for which we are liable to the penalty of death by the hand of heaven;

And for the sins for which we are liable to the penalty of excision and childlessness;

For all these, O God of forgiveness, forgive us, pardon us, grant us remission.

Source: *The Standard Prayer Book*, tr. Simeon Singer (New York: Bloch Publishing Company, 1915).

REFORM JUDAISM: DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The eighteenth-century Enlightenment and its emphasis on political rights sparked a movement among Jews in Germany to reform their religious practices. Initial efforts focused on revamping the liturgy: modernizing music and integrating some components of Christian practice. This was followed by a more "scientific" approach to Judaism advocated by Abraham Geiger (1810–1875), who was influenced by the critical methodology taught at German universities. Geiger believed that the Jewish Torah was fluid, adaptable to different historical contexts. Reform Judaism was brought to the United States with the immigration of German Jews, and in 1885 a conference of Rabbis was held in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, that explored the direction of that denomination. The outcome was the following Declaration of Principles—or the Pittsburgh Platform, as it is often called. Although the statement was modified at later conferences, Reform Judaism today still holds to these basic tenets.

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 men in miraculous narratives.
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 appreciate 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 cooperate 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 the belief on the divine nature of 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 the Mosaic legislation, which strives to regulate the relations 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.

Source: *Proceedings of the Pittsburg Rabbinical Conference, November 16, 17, 18, 1885* (Richmond, VA: Old Dominion Press, 1923).

ZIONISM: THEODOR HERZL

*Zion in Jewish tradition refers variously to the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, the city of Jerusalem itself, or the larger territory of Judea. Since the days of the Babylonian exile, it has been the focal point in the desires of dispersed Jews to return to their native land. In the 1890s, Hungarian-born Theodor Herzl (1860–1904) founded the modern Zionist movement, which, in response to rampant anti-Semitism throughout Europe, aimed to reunite Jews in a homeland. Herzl's movement continued after his death and, in the aftermath of the Nazi Holocaust, succeeded in creating the modern country of Israel. The following is from Herzl's seminal book, *The Jewish State*, in which he argues that Palestine, rather than Argentina, is the most suitable location for Jewish repatriation.*

No one can deny the gravity of the situation of the Jews. Wherever they live in perceptible numbers, they are more or less persecuted. Their equality before the law, granted by statute, has become practically a dead letter. They are debarred from filling even moderately high positions, either in the army, or in any public or private capacity. And attempts are made to thrust them out of business also: "Don't buy from Jews!"

Attacks in Parliaments, in assemblies, in the press, in the pulpit, in the street, on journeys—for example, their exclusion from certain hotels—even in places of recreation, become daily more numerous. The forms of persecution vary according to the countries and social circles in which they occur. In Russia, imposts are levied on Jewish villages; in Rumania, a few persons are put to death; in Germany, they get a good beating occasionally; in Austria, Anti-Semites exercise terrorism over all public life; in Algeria, there are traveling agitators; in Paris, the Jews are shut out of the so-called best social circles and excluded from clubs. Shades of anti-Jewish feeling are innumerable. But this is not to be an attempt to make out a doleful category of Jewish hardships. . . .

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 creation of a new State is neither ridiculous nor impossible. We have in our day witnessed the process in connection with nations which were not largely members of the middle class, but poorer, less educated, and consequently weaker than ourselves. The Governments of all countries scourged by Anti-Semitism will be keenly interested in assisting us to obtain the sovereignty we want.

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

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

Argentina is one of the most fertile countries in the world, extends over a vast area, has a sparse population and a mild climate. The Argentine Republic would derive considerable profit from the cession of a portion of its territory to us. The present infiltration of Jews has certainly produced some discontent, and it would be necessary to enlighten the Republic on the intrinsic difference of our new movement.

Palestine is our ever-memorable historic home. The very name of Palestine would attract our people with a force of marvelous potency. If his Majesty the Sultan were to give us Palestine, we could in return undertake to regulate the whole finances of Turkey.

Source: Theodor Herzl, *The Jewish State*, tr. Sylvie d' Avigdor (London: D. Nutt, 1896), ch. 2, "The Jewish Question."

RECONSTRUCTIONIST JUDAISM: PRAYER OF THIRTEEN WANTS

In 1926, a dedication ceremony took place for the new headquarters of the Society for the Advancement of Judaism, an organization associated with Reconstructionist Judaism. On that occasion Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan offered the following "Prayer of Thirteen Wants," which subsequently was included in the Reconstructionist Sabbath Prayer Book. The eighth and tenth of these "wants" especially reflect the progressive Reconstructionist ideal of integrating traditional Judaism with contemporary life.

1. We want Judaism to help us overcome temptation, doubt and discouragement.
2. We want Judaism to imbue us with a sense of responsibility for the righteous use of the blessings wherewith God endows us.
3. We want the Jew so to be trusted that his yea will be taken as yea, and his nay as nay.
4. We want to learn how to utilize our leisure to best advantage, physically, intellectually, and spiritually.
5. We want the Jewish home to live up to its traditional standards of virtue and piety.
6. We want the Jewish upbringing of our children to further their moral and spiritual growth, and to enable them to accept with joy their heritage as Jews.
7. We want the synagogue to enable us to worship God in sincerity and in truth.
8. We want our religious traditions to be interpreted in terms of understandable experience and to be made relevant to our present-day needs.
9. We want to participate in the upbuilding of Eretz Yisrael as a means to the renaissance of the Jewish spirit.
10. We want Judaism to find rich, manifold and ever new expression in philosophy, letters and the arts.
11. We want all forms of Jewish organization to make for spiritual purpose and ethical endeavor.
12. We want the unity of Israel throughout the world to be fostered through mutual help in time of need, and through cooperation in the furtherance of Judaism at all time.
13. We want Judaism to function as a potent influence for justice, freedom and peace in the life of men and nations.

Source: Mordecai Kaplan, "Criteria of Jewish Loyalty," *Sabbath Prayer Book* (New York: Jewish Reconstructionist Foundation, 1945).

Christianity

INTRODUCTION

Christianity is founded on the life and teachings of Jesus, a first century C.E. Jew who was executed by the Roman authorities for subversion. During its first few decades, Christianity was a sect within Judaism, but it quickly expanded beyond its Palestinian borders and Jewish framework, becoming an independent religion. Two elements of Christian doctrine are essentially Jewish. First, Jesus is the Messiah, or anointed king, who is spoken of in Jewish prophetic writings. The term *christ* is a Greek translation of the Hebrew word *messiah*, so Jesus is referred to as the Christ. Second, the message of Jesus is the kingdom of God. Keeping with Jewish apocalyptic notions of the Messiah, early Christians expected that the kingdom would be established by cataclysmic events. A third element of Christianity departs from its Jewish heritage, namely, the belief that Jesus is God in human form. Building on this, a fourth element is that, by his work, teachings, death, and resurrection, Jesus became the savior of the world.

The Life of Jesus

Jesus left no writings, and our knowledge of his life and teachings comes almost exclusively from the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. These narratives are traditionally ascribed to his disciples, but they probably were written and compiled anonymously between forty and sixty years after his death. They also were written by believers for believers, blending historical memories with early Church teaching. Reconstructing an accurate picture of Jesus, then, is difficult—according to some theologians, impossible.

Jesus was born about 4 B.C.E. and raised in Nazareth, a small agricultural city in the Galilee region. Little is known about Jesus until he began his ministry at about age 30. Jewish territories at that time were under especially oppressive Roman rule, which caused widespread unrest. Since the times of the independent Jewish monarchies hundreds of years earlier, 90 percent of the Jewish population had consisted of agrarian peasants who supported the ruling priestly elite through taxes on their harvest. Additional taxes were imposed by the Romans, and still more were collected to support local building projects, such as those of King Herod. By the time of Jesus, peasant taxes totaled about 40 percent of the harvest, forcing many into debt or sale of family land. Unemployment was also high. As the Romans reduced the size of