

9

~~Five in Jan '89~~

IDEAS FOR HAG HA-SEMIKHAH

The address should consist of a kind of manifesto of Yeshiva University's philosophy of the rabbinate.

It should include the primacy of Torah; Torah U'Madda; the ideal of service to the community; the combination of commitment and open mindedness, loyalty to Orthodoxy and Outreach to the non-Orthodox community, dedication to our own religious growth and the spiritual and well-being of others.

Included in this, should be a statement on the combination of a sense of responsibility to Torah (and, hence, the careful consultation with Roshei Yeshivah and older colleagues on important questions) together with the assumption of one's own professional, spiritual, and halakhic responsibility. Speak about Rav Chaim Volozhener's teaching of intellectual independence, and how he learned this from the Gaon, and how he even used it in refusing to go along with the Gaon's fulminations against Hasadism. In this connection, two of my greatest recollections of Rabbi Soloveitchik are: when he scolded me in class (see my Introduction to the two volume Soloveitchik Festschrift) and when I asked him about the Manhattan eruv, he told me to go figure it out myself and do what I think is right.