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I. INTRODUCTION

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That wholeness -- which included religion, nationalism, and community (*ישראל, גולה, ישראל, ישראל*) -- has unravelled. Except for those whose religious commitment to Judaism remains strong, the greatest efforts of Jews who want to remain Jewish have been directed to:

- .Israel and Zionism and UJA (or British version)

- .Local Jewish Community = Federation (USA), Boards of
Deputies (Eng.)

Often (usually!) -- both combine as elements of (sociologists) "JEWISH CIVIC RELIGION". These, plus "rituals" (as Bar Mitzvah, seder, Hanukkah gifts) but without discernible religious passion.

I share with you a question posed to me by a Jewish community near New York: Is this Jewish civic religion -- this JEWISHNESS without JUDAISM -- an authentic form of Jewish identity, or a form of -- idolatry?

2. At first glance -- is silly question: No idols being worshipped -- Answer: difference between fetishism/idolatry. Idolatry: Substituting part for whole; absolutizing the relative or contingent: or = displacing G-d from the center of one's values, commitments.

(To recast question in cultural rather than theological terms: Is Jewish identity adequately served by individual instruments of Jewish affiliation, without a transcendent commitment, or is, ultimately, the whole complex of Jewish living necessary for creative survival?)

In this sense, problem is indeed a real one. And while I tend to reply in the affirmative -- that it is or can become a form of SY -- I want to beware of sins or oversimplification and overstatement.

3. Let us put problem in Biblical prospective --

3 covenants: Noah (humanity at large)

Abraham (Jewish people and land)

Moses (Torah) (and Mitzvot)

((וי) ה' אלהינו ה' אחד - "אין עוד מלבדו" - אין עוד מלבדו)

Jew who is religious -- berit Torah automatically comprehends other two covenants -- Must be a mentsch and a Jew.

Jew who accepts berit Noah ONLY -- is effectively and functionally non-Jewish! Espousing universal causes like: peace, nuclear disarmament, abolish hunger, ecology = noble but not enough to qualify as Jewish. Jewishness includes berit Noah -- but goes beyond it.

In 1919, Trotzky and Zinoviev reviewing parade of Communist participants. All in native costumes, very colorful. Said Zinoviev (Hirsch Apfelbaum) to Trotzky (Leib Bronstein): But where are the Zulus? Trotzky: Don't be silly; what Jew would wear a ring in his nose?

So: HUMANISM alone is, for the Jew, the ring of assimilation in his nose.

4. But for this audience, by your very presence here, no

need expatiate on need for Jewishness, for b. Abraham. If any of us has doubt that b. Abraham is alive and well, that our Jewishness is our distinguishing mark and a source of our cohesiveness -- consider how unproblematic that is for the goyim -- ST - QEII - July 4, '76, Entebbe, Mendel the "kosher waiter."

Our question is: Can we stop at b. Abraham or must we go on to b. Moshe? Are our devotion to Israel, Jewish community, Zionism, Israel appeal, Jewish identify enough/idolatrous?

Unquestionably -- State Israel = salient fact Jewish history our time (unthinkable...); UJA (...) one most monumental tributes Jewish generosity; Federations (USA) and Board Deputies (England) -- noble expression Jewish cohesiveness and community consciousness. But -- are these enough?

5. If I had to seek metaphor for relationship Jewishness/Judaism -- body and soul. Both together ----- living, active, functioning, human being. Remove Jewishness -- (ethnic, national element) as early Reform Judaism tried ("Germans of Mosaic persuasion) and you are left with relative abstractions -- spirit without body = GHOST.

But if "Judaism" without "Jewishness" is a ghost, then "Jewishness" without "Judaism" is a body without spirit -- in other words, a corpse. And dress up a corpse however you will, it remains a cold, lifeless, spiritless relic.

Jewish Statehood without Jewish spirit; Jewish philanthropy

without Jewish Torah; communal agencies without Shabbat; Jewish homes without Jewish books; gefilte fish without faith; matzah balls without mitzvot and emunah -- will ensure survival of neither Jewishness nor Judaism.

Jewish life is not and should not be monochromatic, monolithic. Fabric Jewish life made up of many strands: Yiddish --- Hebrew --- Zionism --- philanthropy --- Jewish academic scholarship ---. But without Judaism, without Torah -- will fail. ... Will unravel...

Another metaphor: each of these is a spoke -- if it leads to core of wheel, successful; if not -- remain only with that spoke and nothing more.

Why is ethnicity alone (in its various guises) unsatisfactory?

For one thing, ethnicity alone is self-defeating; divides us as well as unites.

Ethnicity alone -- for Jews as well as non-Jews -- can lead to racism. In case of nationalist ethnicity -- jingoism. And -- Jews should never be bigots. Even when we feel isolated, oppressed, and paid in the coin of ingratitude for all we have done (for other minorities, Arabs, Africans) we must never, never submit to the human weakness of racial anger and bigoted discrimination. It separates not only Jews from non-Jews, but Jews from Jews.

Take ethnicity far enough, and you conclude with the ethnicity of sub-groups. Remember that Israel contains not only

Jews in general, but Georgian Jews and Anglo-American Jews and Rumanian Jews and Yemenite Jews and Russian Jews and Moroccan Jews. To avoid divisiveness, we must go beyond being mere ethnics and rediscover our spiritual roots and historic identity, recapturing the Jewish vision of the future, a future of a united people and of a united mankind.

TIME (One most poignant, powerful parables failure Jewish nationalism without Jewish faith, Zionism without Torah, b. Abraham without b. Moshe = striking image Yitzhak in Agnon's Temol Shilshom: Nightmare: standing seashore Jaffa, without shoes. Wind blows off hat. Hears davening shul 2nd floor -- can be reached only by ladder. Climbs half way in window when slams shut --bare head within shul, barefoot outside it.....)

Of course, you will challenge my assertion that Religion has potential to overcome divisiveness. And, of course, in short run, you're right: most Jewish disunity today centers on religious issues. Indeed, Orthodox Jews have not always been models of tolerance and openness. For too long we have substituted invective for argument, and have often evoked an equal and opposite reaction. Indeed, in recent months the counter- invective in USA and Israel has been very opposite and even more than equal. But Orthodox Jews will have to learn to be more civil in the rhetoric, more respectful in their approach,

more conscious of their responsibility towards the mitzvah of "thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," and of Kohelet's admonition that "words spoken softly by wise men are heeded more readily than the foolish shouting by an official" (Ecclesiastes 9:17). Non-Orthodox Jewish leaders too must learn the same lesson and not adopt the stridency that they have learned from some Orthodox extremists. Neither abusive rhetoric nor blackmail nor financial pressure (and all three have and are being used against Orthodoxy) are the proper way to conduct Jewish fraternal discourse -- and neither camp has been guiltless in this respect.

It is difficult nowadays to touch upon the issue of Jewish unity and intradenominational relations without hitting up against the newest item in the lexicon of Jewish trendiness: PLURALISM.

6. Since I cannot avoid the subject, let me be as brief as possible by giving you gist remarks... Jewish Chronicle some months ago. (GBS - I love to quote myself -- it lends spice to my conversation.)

I confess to being confused by all the current talk of "religious pluralism." My perplexity is deepened by the elevation of "pluralism" to the rank of a sacred principle. It has become a symbol, and whenever an idea is transformed into a symbol, it becomes so enmeshed in emotions and so entangled in mass psychology that it is exceedingly difficult to treat it

analytically and critically. Sacred cows, like golden calves, inevitably lead one astray.

The way "pluralism" has been used in recent months and years makes it sound suspiciously like relativism, reducing all differences in principle and value to questions of taste.

Relativism is the proposition that because there are many kinds of "things" or points of view, and each has an equal right to be heard and advocated in a democratic society, they are therefore necessarily equally valid. If pluralism is just the newest name for that kind of discredited ethical or religious relativism, it is not deserving of our attention.

My conception of pluralism in the Jewish religious community can best be summed up by reference to a famous dictum in the Jewish tradition -- that there are shivim panim la Torah, there are 70 faces or facets to Torah. Nor one is more valuable or significant or legitimate than the other 69. Judaism is not monolithic. However -- there are only 70 (the number, of course, is arbitrary) and not an infinite number of such faces or facets. A pluralism that accepts everything as co-legitimate is not pluralism, but the kind of relativism that leads to spiritual nihilism. If everything is kosher, nothing is koshe. If "Torah" has an infinite number of faces, then it is faceless and without value or significance.

Orthodox Jews are fully aware of the Talmud's comment on the

disputes between the House of Hillel and the House of Shammai, that "both these and these are the words of the living G-d." Unfortunately, this profound statement has been abused and turned into a slogan by ignoring the fact that the controversialists were at one in their commitment to the halakhah and its divine origin, and disagreed only on its interpretation with regard to very specific matters. The dictum implies a pluralism within the halachic context -- only. It simply cannot be stretched to cover all "interpretations of Judaism" as co-legitimate.

Because Orthodox rabbis consider those movements not bound by the traditional halakhah as heretical, many refuse to accord non-Orthodox rabbis any credibility as leaders of Jewish religious communities.

I consider this an egregious error. Facts cannot be wished away by theories, no matter how cherished. And the facts are that Reform and Conservative communities are not only more numerous in their official memberships (in some countries) than the Orthodox community, but they are also vital, powerful, and dynamic; they are committed to Jewish survival, each according to its own lights; they are a part of Klal Yisrael; and they consider their rabbis their leaders. From a functional point of view, therefore, non-Orthodox rabbis are valid leaders of Jewish religious communities, and it is both fatuous and self-defeating not to acknowledge this openly and draw the necessary consequences -- for example, establishing friendly and harmonious

and respectful relationships and working together, all of us, towards those Jewish communal and global goals that we share and that unite us inextricably and indissolubly.

As an Orthodox Jew, I not only have no trouble in acknowledging the functional validity of non-Orthodox rabbinic leadership, but also in granting that non-Orthodox rabbis and lay people may possess spiritual dignity. If they are sincere, if they believe in G-d, if they are motivated by principle and not by convenience or trendiness, if they endeavor to carry out the consequences of their faith in a consistent manner -- then they are religious people. In this sense, they are no different from Orthodox Jews who may attain such spiritual dignity -- or may not, if their faith is not genuinely felt and if they do not struggle to have their conduct conform with their principles. Phonies abound in all camps, and should be respected by no one, no matter what their labels. And sincerely devout people exist everywhere, and deserve the admiration of all.

But neither functional validity nor spiritual dignity are identical with Jewish legitimacy. "Validity" derives from the Latin validus, strong. It is a factual, descriptive term. "Legitimacy" derives from the Latin lex, law. It is a normative and evaluative term.

Validity describes the fact of one's religious existence. Dignity refers to the quality of one's religious posture, not its

content. It is the latter which, to my eyes, determines what we are terming legitimacy. Here I have no choice but to judge such legitimacy by my own understanding of what constitutes Judaism and what does not. The criterion of such legitimacy is the Jewish lex -- the halakhah; not a specific interpretation of an individual halakhah; not a general tendency to be strict or lenient; but the fundamental acceptance of halakhah's divine origin, of Torah min hashamayim. And if we become bogged down in definitions of these terms, then let us extricate ourselves from the theological morass by saying that the criterion is acceptance of halakhah as transcendentally obligatory, as the holy and normative "way" for Jews, as decisive law and not just something to "consult" in the process of developing policy.

Hence, I consider myself a brother to all Jews, in love and respect, and together with them I seek the unity of our people. But I cannot in the name of such unity, assent to a legitimation of what every fiber of my being tells me is in violation of the most sacred precepts of the Torah.

At bottom, any vision of the truth excludes certain competing visions. So it is with the Torah commitment. Under no circumstances can an Orthodox Jew, for instance, consider as Jewishly authentic a view of Judaism that excludes faith in G-d -- such as "humanistic Judaism"; or one that condones marriage of Jew with non-Jew; or one that rejects the halakhic structure of Sabbath observance or the laws of divorce or the institution

of kashrut. To ask that, in the name of pluralism, Orthodox Jews accept such interpretations as Jewishly legitimate is to ask that they stop being Orthodox. If that is what pluralism and mutual legitimation mean, the price is too high.

But I remain optimistic: despite recent Haredi militancy, despite women rabbis and now cantors in Conservative movement, despite shocking vote for patrilineal descent in Reform (Liberal) groups -- it is primarily a shared transcendent vision and commitment that will ultimately unite us.

Let me now return to my critique of contemporary Jewish ethnicity in its various guises -- b. Abraham without b. Moshe. My next point is this: ethnicity is only a stop-gap measure. It will not last. It is too thin and anemic a diet, and remains unfulfilling for a questing heart and mind. Jewishness without learning and without duties and without faith will never satisfy the spiritual longings of young and intelligent people who are genuinely searching for something deep and meaningful. Youth's breathlessness in its round of protest meetings for various Jewish causes is commendable -- far better than the adults who consider themselves too delicate and their reactions too fastidious to engage in such matters as protesting for the rights of Jews elsewhere; but life ultimately demands something deeper, something more enduring. What then?

7. So, ethnicity is a step, not a goal; a gesture and

not and ultimate reality. Put in another way, we might say that man naturally quests for the Supernatural. By supernatural I do not mean miracle-making, the suspension of natural law, or some kind of magic. I mean quite simply G-d Who is above nature because He created it. The verse, "In the beginning G-d created the heavens and the earth," means that the Jewish G-d is a supernatural One: He is above nature, having called it into being.

Man knows intuitively, in his very bones as it were --

Superior -- that there is more to existence than what we encounter in society, in office or factory, in the family; that there is something more to life than the physical and the psychological and the technological, than our petty pleasures and pains. And this knowledge must eventually be translated out of our unconscious, out of a dim and vague awareness, into the full consciousness of man as faith in the Almighty.

Several years ago there appeared a new book, A Rumor of Angels, by a distinguished sociologist, Peter L. Berger. In this book, the author pleads for an acknowledgment of the supernatural, and purports to find what he calls "signals of transcendence" in everyday life. Some of the examples he gives include: hope, which refuses to acknowledge the finality of death; the universal revulsion then confronting that which is monstrously evil, such as the powerful and intuitive feeling that

such as an Eichmann is outside the community of men; and even the sense of humor.

Thus too the penchant for drugs and for the narcotic and psychedelic experiences. I am not referring to the addiction of the poor, who obviously turn to drugs in order to escape the dreariness and pain of life, but the addiction by the rich, who have painfully discovered that money doesn't answer the great questions of life. They are bored to distraction by the meaninglessness and purposelessness of our affluent society, they search for something that they cannot articulate, and they believe that in drugs they will find a self-transcending experience.

These are aberrations which I cannot in good conscience recommend to you. But they are phenomena that manifest deep yearnings in the human soul which may remain dormant for centuries but which must sooner or later struggle for release. They say something of great importance to us. In the realm of psychology we know of neurotics and neurosis, whereby certain experiences are too painful and are therefore repressed, only to reappear disguised as symptoms. Similary, in matters of the spirit, the quest for the Supernatural -- what Viktor Frankl has called "The Search for Meaning" -- is often suppressed because of the tremendous cultural pressure which militates against authentic religious faith, and is therefore expressed in a spiritually neurotic fashion in various disguises. Just as a

perceptive psychologist can read the symptoms of his neurotic patient and trace back the original suppressed experience, so a spiritually sensitive person can interpret the disguises under which emunah, the quest for the Supernatural, appears in both healthy and unhealthy fashions.

8. Secular Jewish activity alone -- whether of Zionism or a Jewish community, b. Abraham without b. Moshe, -- cannot answer the ultimate questions of sensitive Jews.

If they claim to be ultimate answers -- they are idolatrous.

If they ignore ultimate questions -- they are bankrupt. And in the end, they are self-defeating.

9. I, for one, cannot bring myself to believe that this will be the fate of Jewry. I cannot believe it, because I implicitly have faith that the fate of Torah is not obscurity; because I believe that Jewishness itself ultimately inspires Judaism; and because I have a great deal of confidence in the Jew and believe that he will soon wake up to the fact that it is futile, eerie, and ridiculous to go about dancing with a painted corpse.

Most of us come to G-d only when our idols lie shattered, the shards of their clay feet puncturing our illusions and goading us to look up, beyond the confines of our own creations, past the dazzling display of our arrogant inventions, to the brooding Presence which summons us and awaits us so patiently.

So it is with the idols of contemporary Jewish life. If the

current revival of Jewish awareness is to prove of lasting value, it must go all the way, it must make the leap from ethnos to ethos, from rallies to religion, from protest to practice, from Zionism alone or Jewish identity alone to the totality of Jewish experience; from b. Noah to b. Abraham to b. Moshe.

Or -- as the late Rabbi Maimon used to say -- from kultura to kol Torah! Unless there is such an authentic turn, the new Jewish ethnicity will last only as long as the external dangers persist; it will not survive the improvement in the political, social, and economic conditions of American and world Jewry!

10. As a way of expressing my faith in the future of the wholeness and holiness of our Jewish people.

let me read to you 2 paragraphs from the Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech by that great American novelist, voice of the American South, William Faulkner.

I decline to accept the end of Man. It is easy enough to say that man is immortal simply because he will endure; that when the last ding-dong of doom has clanged and faded from the last worthless rock hanging tideless in the last red and dying evening, that even then there will still be one more sound: that of his puny inexhaustible voice, still talking.

I refuse to accept this.

I believe that man will not merely endure: He will prevail. He is immortal, not because he alone among creatures has an inexhaustible voice, but because he has a soul, a spirit capable of compassion and sacrifice and endurance.

I say the same about the Jew. I believe that the Jew will not merely survive; he will prevail, and flourish. He is immortal, not because he has an inexhaustible voice hawking his wares or shares, or garnering more graduate degrees, or devising new inventions; but because he has a neshamah, a spirit capable of compassion and sacrifice and endurance; because he has the insight into a reality beyond himself and an irrepressible urge to reach out to the G-d of his fathers; because he has the patience to wait years and even centuries for the promise of the G-d of Israel to be realized, and his own hopes vindicated and his prayers answered.

(11. ST: Rav Kook -- "As men is tzugebunden oiben, glitcht men nisht unten.")