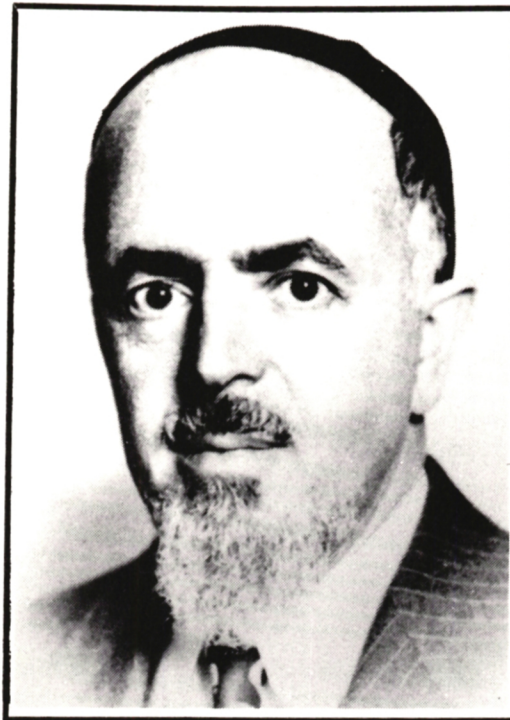


In Memoriam



Rabbi Dr. Leo Jung
1892-1987

Rabbi Jacob J. Schacter

On behalf of The Jewish Center, I would like to welcome you to our *Azkarah* this evening in memory of our late great teacher, guide, role-model and friend, Rabbi Leo Jung, הרב אליהו בן הרב מאיר, צבי, זכר צדיק לברכה. It is hard to believe that some six weeks have already elapsed since his *petirah* on Shabbat Hanukkah. With every passing day we miss his wisdom, we miss his caring; but we remember his teachings, and we remember his many accomplishments.

At the conclusion of this week's Torah reading, *Parshat Yitro*, we read: ויעמד העם מרחק ומשה נגש אל הערפל אשר שם האלקים (שמות כ:יח). "The people stood from afar, at a distance, but Moshe approached the cloud wherein was found the presence of God." When Rabbi Jung, z'l, began his activity in America in the 1920's, ויעמד העם מרחק—the people, American Jewry, stood very far from the values and practices of traditional Judaism. ומשה נגש אל הערפל—like Moshe Rabbenu, Rabbi Jung plunged into this cloud and into this darkness and there he discovered, and created for all to see, the presence of God.

Our collective debt to him is enormous. And as I said in my own *hesped* of Rabbi Jung some six weeks ago, if we Orthodox Jews stand tall in America today, as thank God we do, it is because we stand on the shoulders of our late, beloved Rabbi Leo Jung.

Throughout a long and illustrious career, Rabbi Jung built many institutions and touched countless lives. It is my privilege to present to you this evening four distinguished speakers representing both these spheres of achievement. They are: Mr. Martin Schwarzschild, honorary president of The Jewish Center and devoted disciple of Rabbi Jung; Mr. Moses Feuerstein, honorary president of the Orthodox Union, whose family enjoyed a close relationship with Rabbi Jung for many years; Rabbi Leonard Rosenfeld, scholar, *talmid hakham*, and son-in-law of Rabbi Jung; and Dr. Norman Lamm, former rabbi of The Jewish Center and president of Yeshiva University.

Mr. Martin Schwarzschild

Just seven months ago I had the honor of addressing those assembled at our Annual Dinner, which this year paid tribute to Rabbi Dr. Leo Jung on his 95th birthday, his 70 years in the rabbinate and the 65 years he and Mrs. Jung were associated with The Jewish Center. Tonight it is my privilege to recall the pastoral side of Rabbi Jung. Others, I'm sure, will speak of his impact on the community and on world Jewry, and of his many associations with the diversified facets of organized Jewish life—all of which knew no bounds for this cultured, international personality.

But his first love, after his family—his devoted Irmalee, his daughters, sons-in-law, grandchildren and great-grandchildren—was The Jewish Center family. He used that phrase with a twinkle in his eye and with a tone that conveyed the love he had for all those who were part of it.

And indeed, he did know all who were part of it. For as far back as I can remember, the seat behind my right shoulder as I stand before you tonight was occupied by Rabbi Jung. From that vantage point, in one keen glance around this synagogue, Rabbi Jung would note which members of The Jewish Center family, *his* family, were present.

Azkarah at The Jewish Center

Sunday evening
January 31, 1988
13 Shevat, 5748

Rabbi Jacob J. Schacter,
Chairman

Mr. Martin Schwarzschild
Mr. Moses Feuerstein
Rabbi Leonard Rosenfeld
Dr. Norman Lamm

making it the most vital force on the American Jewish scene. And as a *halutz*, he set a pattern for others to follow—and they did.

I well remember my student days at the *ישיבת רבנו יצחק אלחנן* studying for the rabbinate. Of all the rabbis serving in Jewish communities, it was Rabbi Jung whom we saw as our model. Some may have had equal skills. Others may have had equal eloquence. But we knew of no one who embodied all his virtues and all his attributes. More than anyone else, he represented Torah-true Judaism, enshrined with honor, with dignity, and with glory.

We shall miss him. As human beings, as Jews, as Torah-true Jews, we shall miss him. We shall miss him as Diaspora Jews and we shall miss him as Israeli Jews. For Israel, today, is desperately in need of a whole army of Rabbi Jungs to help restore Torah values and practices, Torah direction and goals, to help restore the honor and dignity of Torah in an intellectually and spiritually embattled community.

And we shall miss him as family, as wife, as children, as grandchildren, and as great-grandchildren. For beyond the public Rabbi Jung whom you knew, there was a private Rabbi Jung—warm, gentle, caring, loving, and so human. This Rabbi Jung was revealed, in his full essence, only to us, his family.

There is a void in our lives. It is a vacuum which neither memorials nor eulogies can possibly fill. Hopefully, as time goes on, we shall find our *נחמה עם שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים*. We shall glory in his memory which shall never die.

Dr. Norman Lamm

I knew Rabbi Jung in several capacities: as his associate in the rabbinate of The Jewish Center for 18 years; as a congregant here for the past 11 years; as President of Yeshiva University where he served as both professor emeritus of Jewish ethics and as honorary trustee on our Board. But I speak this evening not in any official capacity, but primarily as an American Jew in the latter half of the twentieth century who is concerned with the future of Torah and the State of Israel and the Jewish people, and who had the opportunity to see him labor on their behalf and leave them far better, healthier, and more secure than he found them because of his passage through life.

Rabbi Jung always struck me as a remarkably serene man. His serenity was more than the typical unflappability of the Englishman; Rabbi Jung was an Englishman, an American, a German, an Hungarian—a truly international man. It issued from far deeper resources than a mere cultural bias. Its origin was in the sense of wholeness, of *temimut*, that comes from profound faith and inner conviction.

Emunah, Jewish religious experience, comes in two antithetical forms, both equally authentic. One is that of a stormy scene of massive spiritual conflicts, of tormented wrangling with doubt and struggling with loneliness, leaving one filled with pain and anguish and *angst*. The other form of religious experience involves a serene center of spiritual tranquility—irenic, pacific, and happy—reenforced by the faith and trust in the Almighty.

Despite the fact that Rabbi Jung had the capacity to struggle for his principles—and he proved successful when he had to engage in such contention—his essential personality was of the second type, that which is described in the divine command to Abraham, *התהלך לפני והיה תמים*, “walk before Me and you will be whole.” He was whole, a complete personality, unperturbed by dissonance and

after the Holocaust, he was personally responsible for saving more than a thousand individuals and families from their European deathtrap and bringing them to these safe shores.

Yes, this may very well be an Eliyahu legend. But don't you recognize therein our Rabbi Jung? The highest priority in his life was caring for the **תפוחי רעב**, the hungry and the needy, the poor and the homeless. Or, as he was wont to call them: the weaker vessels of society.

Need I tell you of his total commitment to **צדקה וחסד**? Need I tell you of the endless stream of needy who made their way to his office and home and found there a generous heart and a generous hand? Need I tell you of the many hundreds of families who were and still are being supported by the Rabbonim Aid Society? Or the countless *talmidei hakhamim* around the globe who were the beneficiaries of Rabbi Jung's *tzedakah* activities?

And he gave not only money. He gave **חסד שבגופו**. He gave of himself freely to all who needed him, young or aged, sick or troubled. To all, he gave of himself generously and always, irrespective of religious persuasion or practice.

Particularly was he dedicated to our emaciated youth, the emaciated in body and the emaciated in soul. He was sorely pained by Jewish boys and girls who were spiritually famished and religiously undernourished. For like Eliyahu, he was not only a "feeder," he was also a teacher—a superb teacher in the broadest sense of the term.

When Rabbi Jung came to the United States in 1920, he found a Jewry which was religiously barren and educationally deprived. Here he made historic contributions. To young and old, like Eliyahu, he proclaimed, "Come and I will teach you all. I will teach you **דבר שאתה חי בו**. I will teach you Torah and *mitzvot*. I will teach you the principles and the practices of Judaism, for they are the lifeblood of our existence and the lifeblood of our survival." And this remained his tireless mission from 1920 to 1987.

Not only did he organize one of the first day schools in the United States here at The Jewish Center, but his educational concern and assistance also embraced very many great educational institutions of learning: Yeshiva University, the Rabbi Jacob Joseph School, Manhattan Day School, and the Bais Yaakov network, to mention but a few. And beyond the shores of the United States, through the Joint Distribution Committee, through Otzar Ha-Torah, and through his Center Torah Fund, he helped sponsor Torah education everywhere and on all levels, from pre-school classes to rabbinic seminaries and *kollelim*.

Like Eliyahu, he was above all a teacher. Formally and informally, orally and through his extensive writings, using all media, he enthusiastically spread the message of Torah-true Judaism. He spent his whole life teaching. For five decades he lectured at Yeshiva College and Stern College for Women. He preached, he taught not only at The Jewish Center, but everywhere. For he was very much sought after as a lecturer in Jewish communities and on university campuses in the United States and abroad. He was a prolific writer. He authored 37 books and hundreds of articles and essays, some of which have been translated into many languages. All gave expression to the Eliyahu theme: **דבר שאתה חי בו**.

Finally, like Eliyahu ha-Navi who bequeathed his mantle of religious leadership to his student and disciple, Elisha, Rabbi Jung bequeathed his mantle to thousands of students and to hundreds of rabbis. Through them he left an indelible imprint on the American Orthodox community and rabbinate.

As a *halutz*, Rabbi Jung took Orthodoxy out of its defensive and apologetic role. Boldly and courageously he led it into the marketplace of ideas. Armed with truth and conviction, with scholarship and with intellect, with pride and with dignity, and blessed with persuasive eloquence, he not only challenged deviant streams of Judaism and bested them, but he helped reinvigorate Torah-true Judaism,

is fiery, if one's devotion to Torah is dynamic, if one's religious outlook has not become encrusted with routine and boredom and staleness, the two could be reconciled and the *menorah* could become a reality.

For many of us at Yeshiva University and in the camp of Centrist or Modern Orthodoxy, the problem is formulated as *Torah Umadda*, the encounter of Judaism with secular culture. While Rabbi Jung undoubtedly shared our concerns and perceptions in this matter, the central issue for him was the encounter between *yofi* and *ruah*, between beauty and spirit, between esthetics and Torah. And Torah for Rabbi Jung (as for Hermann Cohen) was essentially ethical in its context and intent. Thus, he was fond of defining holiness as morality, citing the verse, *והאל-הקדוש נקדש בצדקה*—"the Holy God is sanctified through righteousness (*tzedakah*)."¹ Now, for the sake of honesty I must say that I did not always agree with him in this emphasis. While I acknowledge that there is an ethical moment in holiness, I am not ready to give it that supremacy in the numinous or the holy.

But that was Rabbi Jung's view, and it not only is an intellectually respectable thesis, but it is morally compelling and, above all, it tells us so much about Rabbi Jung himself! He was an ethico-moral model for his generation, and he endeavored to translate his theory into practice. He felt, correctly, that most of the defections from authentic Judaism were not the result of philosophic problems or theological difficulties but something far more mundane: the revulsion at provincial manners and vulgarisms raised to the level of tradition. Thus, he was exceedingly strict about decorum at services, because he felt that religious devotion (*כוונה*) could not flourish in an atmosphere redolent with gossip and reminiscent of a marketplace. He was furious with dirty kosher restaurants and with unkempt and unappetizing *mikvaot*. He not only failed to detect an inconsistency between religion and esthetics, between faith and dignity, but he insisted upon their critical need for each other. And to these practical tasks he brought his own inner flame—not a raging fire, but a tranquil yet unquenchable light, a *מנורה של אש*, that gave him the vision and the persistence to endow American Orthodoxy with dignity and grace and beauty.

This day, dedicated to the memory of Rabbi Jung, is located between two significant Torah readings. Yesterday we read *פרשת בשלח*, centering on the *shirah*, the great Song of Deliverance when Israel was redeemed from Egypt. This coming Shabbat we shall read *פרשת יתרו*, which includes primarily the *עשרת הדברות*. The conjunction of these two Torah portions with this memorial event is remarkable. The *shirah* is the symbol of esthetics; song is part of the world of art and beauty. The *עשרת הדברות* are the primary source of Jewish ethics and morality as well as law. And Rabbi Jung, as we mentioned, was an eminent exemplar of this fusion of ethics and esthetics, of beauty and holiness. For him, esthetics, if genuine, had perforce to lead to ethics; and he considered ethics beautiful and filled with the grace of holiness.



During the years of our association here at The Jewish Center, he gave me a certain amount of advice. Not all of it did I accept, either because of disposition or time restraints. I never did manage a daily walk of two miles or so around the Central Park reservoir, nor did I pull down the blinds, remove my shoes, close my eyes, and rest for half an hour every afternoon. But one piece of advice proved most helpful to me in my career, and it was a nugget of wisdom which he shared with me very early in my tenure at The Jewish Center. "Lamm," he said to me, "never expect gratitude and you will never be unhappy." If this is true universally, it is all the more true for the rabbi, who as a matter of course and profession does favors for

oppositions. His gift for reconciling opposites, or at least for abiding their coexistence without visible tension, was part of his educational background. He was a man of wide culture, one in whom Cambridge University and the Pressburg Yeshiva encountered each other comfortably and respectfully.

This spiritual composure and inner quietude characterized his thinking as well as his feeling. Indeed, it was the basis for what, I believe, was his essential theological concern, his Jewish *weltanschauung*.

Rabbi Jung passed away on Hanukkah. Permit me, therefore, to analyze his fundamental intellectual orientation on the basis of the great symbol of Hanukkah, that of the *menorah*, the candelabrum in the Tabernacle.

In a rather strange passage, the Rabbis tell us that Moses had some difficulty with the divine instruction to construct the *menorah*. משה נתקשה במעשה המנורה עד שהראה לו הקב"ה מנורה של אש. Moses was troubled by the entire matter of the *menorah* so that the Holy One had to show him a מנורה של אש, a candelabrum made of fire.

What did the Sages mean to teach us with this comment? What made them attribute to Moses difficulties which should not trouble even a child beginning the study of *Humash*, requiring of the Holy One to project for him a fiery image of the *menorah*?

I believe that a major problem perturbed them: the *menorah* yields mixed signals, it is the symbol of two apparently conflicting values—beauty and spirituality. The very loving attention the Torah showered on the details of the ornamentation of the *menorah*—the knobs and the flowers and the cups—is sufficient evidence of its status as a work of unblemished art. In the course of time, generations of Jews came to revere the candelabrum as a Jewish symbol of beauty.

At the same time, the pure flame of the *menorah* transformed it into the ultimate symbol of spirituality. Thus, the Prophet Zechariah, from whose work we read in the Haftorah on the Shabbat Rabbi Jung returned his soul to his Maker, sees a *menorah* in his vision and exclaims, כי לא בחיל ולא בכח כי אם ברוחי אמר ה' צבקות—“neither by might nor by strength [shall one prevail], but by My spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts.”

Now, these two values suggested by the *menorah*, beauty and spirit, do not at all seem compatible. Beauty is external, it speaks to appearances. Spirit is inwardness, it reflects essence, not appearance. Beauty is enchanting, spirit is enduring. Beauty thrives in revelation—the artist or performer needs an appreciative audience; spirit shuns public scrutiny and flourishes only in concealment, in the closed chambers of the heart, shy and shame-faced. Beauty seeks exposure, even unto nudity; spirit needs modesty and hiddenness. Thus, Immanuel Kant (in his third book, *The Critique of Judgment*) speaks of the conflict between ethics and aesthetics. Matthew Arnold, in his *Athens and Jerusalem*, made famous his dichotomy between Greeks and Hebrews as based upon the encounter between the two incompatibles, beauty and spirit.

Yet the *menorah* implies both—and thus the difficulty experienced by the Sages and midrashically attributed by them to Moses himself. How indeed construct this center-piece for the Temple when it is in and of itself a contradiction? Hence, the *menorah* required the direct intervention of the Creator Himself, for no mere mortal—not even Moses—could find a way out of the dilemma on his own authority.

So God Himself, as it were, gave His blessing to the *menorah*, and by projecting it as a fiery image not only showed Moses how to build it, but conceptually confirmed it, thus denying that the two symbols were mutually exclusive and insisting that beauty and spirit were indeed compatible and worthy of coexistence. All that is needed is—a little vision, a little fire, a modicum of prophetic passion. If one's faith

him sorely and will be all the more devout in their thanksgiving to the Almighty for having sent them Rabbi Jung at critical times.

Thousands of refugees during World War II came to this country in safety because he worked indefatigably to obtain visas for them, and untold numbers of Jewish children in Iran and France and elsewhere received succor for their bodies and nourishment for their souls and minds because of his labors.

For all this, and for much more, he is deserving of our gratitude. And those who failed to express this precious sentiment during his lifetime owe it to him now and in the future—by continuing his good works towards others.

Indeed, it is especially those hapless individuals, suffering in poverty but refusing to undergo the humiliation of begging; and those institutions of genuine substance whose value was known only to a chosen few such as Rabbi Jung and who are now organizationally orphaned—it is they who deserve continued support by those moral enough and sensitive enough to acknowledge the gratitude they owe to him and his memory.

We remember him, and always shall, as a most unusual man who inhabited our little portion of the planet and our tiny span of history with exemplary grace and fortitude of spirit. His example will always continue to inspire us. For, where others merely ate at the banquet of Judaism, he dined. He possessed an unassuming elegance and modest refinement. He had the capacity of transmuting knowledge into wisdom, etiquette into ethics, manners into morals, politeness into principle.

Perhaps we can sum up our farewell to him in the words of a famous couplet in the Shakespearean sonnet:

“Who is it who says most? Which can say more
Than this rich praise—that you alone are you?”

תהא נפשו צרורה בצרור החיים.

May his soul be bound up in the bond of immortal life.

many people. I have learned never to expect it, and to be delighted when it is offered, thus sparing myself frustration and bitterness. But the fact that he was so very right, and that he never wanted or expected it for himself, does not absolve the rest of us from the powerful moral and Jewish obligation to offer gratitude graciously and wholeheartedly—to him. Permit me to mention but a few of those who owe him an eternal debt of thanks.

The Jewish Center must always be grateful to his memory for presiding over its destiny, shaping its collective character, and elevating it to its preeminent position among synagogues throughout the world. He brought to this congregation an awareness of authentic faith more in his very personality than in his preaching.

I shall never forget a scene that took place in this sanctuary the first year that I was here. Rabbi Jung was speaking, and a lady well past her middle age who had been raised in The Jewish Center but moved away years before, looked at him adoringly, even worshipfully, and said to me shortly afterwards, "Rabbi Jung reminds me of God." I confess that I was not only a bit overwhelmed by this extravagant reverence, but disturbed because I considered it blasphemous. Upon further reflection, however, I changed my mind. Indeed, this is exactly what a rabbi should strive for: to remind people that there is a God in the world, to represent to them by example what Godliness is all about. This woman was carrying out the dictum of the Sages, יהי מורה רבך כמורה שמים, "Let your reverence for your rabbi be like your reverence for Heaven." And Rabbi Jung filled an extremely important role in her life—as he has done for so many others at The Jewish Center and elsewhere.

Yeshiva University is grateful to him for having inspired several generations of students with the ethical teachings of the Torah tradition. Here again, his living example was more effective than any literary or philosophical text. Rabbi Jung was a man of unimpeachable integrity. His honesty was self-evident, and his honor uncompromised in the course of close to a century of his distinguished life. Most important, in an age of easy morality even by those who profess faith, Rabbi Jung's religion was simply not "for sale." I remember the late Max Stern telling me, when I was contemplating accepting the call to The Center, that "Rabbi Jung does not know the color of a dollar bill." He preached that one ought not to make a religion out of business—and he himself did not make a business out of religion.

I am reminded, in this connection, of a wise interpretation by R. Baruch Halevi Epstein, author of *Torah Temimah*, recorded in his autobiography, *Mekor Barukh*. The Talmud teaches that the first question asked of every mortal upon reaching the Heavenly Court after his death is "did you conduct your business with *emunah*, faithfully (i.e., honestly)?" The interpretation of the *Torah Temimah*, however, is slightly different. He takes the word *be'emunah* not as an adverb but as a noun. Hence: did you make a business out of your *emunah*, out of your faith or religion? Anyone who knew Rabbi Jung, even superficially, knows that he has an easy task in answering that question. His many former students at Yeshiva University acknowledge their indebtedness to him as a role model of ethical integrity.

Rabbonim Aid Society was the creation of Rabbi Jung and Mrs. Jung. They conceived it, gave birth to it, nurtured it—and hundreds of scholarly immigrant rabbis were not only helped in their daily struggle for existence, but spared humiliation. He treated them with remarkable Jewish sensitivity. Hence he gave respect to his distinguished beneficiaries, and showed concern for their dignity when he and Mrs. Jung personally visited them in their homes. This was an act of *hesed* for which no thanks are adequate, and yet all of us join in doing just that.

Israel and countless Israeli organizations—from yeshivot to UJA to Bonds to Kfar Eliyahu—will miss