

THE DEVELOPMENT OF JUDAISM IN THE SIXTH MILLENNIUM

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Judaism is not a religion of eternal universal truth. Judaism is based on the meaning given to specific events in Jewish history, especially the covenant (a holy committed relationship) between God and the Jewish People which commits them to establish a good and holy society, that would eventually become a blessing for all humanity in a future Messianic Age on earth. Thus, the meanings of specific events in Jewish history are important elements in Jewish thought. Since there is only one God, the God of Israel is also the God of all other peoples. God has inspired prophets of other nations (Noah, Melchizedik, and Balaam) and redeemed other peoples in other lands (Deuteronomy 2:9-23, Amos 9:7). God has also made a covenant - a committed sacred relationship - with one small people: the people of Israel. God and Israel are partners. Thus, the historical development of the Jewish people, its survival in spite of attempts by evil forces to destroy it, and its influence on the development of mankind, are a significant expression of God's desire that humans create a just, holy, loving and peaceful society on earth. This is why Jewish sacred scriptures include a great deal of history. Of the 39 books in what Christians call the Old Testament, 10 are history books (36% by number of pages). Of the 27 books of the New Testament only 1 is a history book (13% by number of pages). The Koran, Vedas and Sutras include even less historical material.

This is also why there are a number of Jewish holidays that commemorate events in Jewish history (from Passover-the 13th century B.C.E. exodus from Egyptian bondage, Purim-the 5th century B.C.E. avoidance of Persian anti-Semitism, and Hanukkah-the 2nd century B.C.E. victory in the fight against the Syrian Greeks for religious freedom, to Yom Hashoah- the 20th century C.E. European Holocaust). But there are no Jewish holidays that commemorate the birth, death, or enlightenment of any individual, human or divine.

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Furthermore, the Hebrew Bible does not begin with the revelation of the Torah at Mount Sinai, or with Abraham and Sarah, the first Jews, but with Adam and Eve, who represent the whole of mankind. Judaism was always aware that it originated within, and in opposition to, long established pagan civilizations that worshipped many Gods who could be represented visually in man made art, and/or located specifically in natural objects i.e. sun, moon, mountain, river, tree, animal, or human being. The one God of the Jews existed primarily in human history, both past and future. The current Jewish calendar year 5762 (2002) is the sixth millennium of Biblical history. The year 1 is not the birth of Abraham or Moses, nor is it the revelation of Torah at Sinai or even the beginning of a new cosmic world cycle. The year one dates from the eating of the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil which launched humanity on a path of moral and social development. It also approximates the beginning of cities, states and writing, the basis for most history.

Since Judaism is a theology of history, we would expect to find that some events in the last thousand years have revealed new religious insights. I will write about three. One is the Kabbalistic (Jewish mystical tradition) understanding of the nature of evil, which was the result of two centuries of Christian anti-Semitism resulting in the expulsion of Jewish communities from most western European countries. Second is the encounter of east European Jews with the secular, scientific, capitalistic, democratic, individualistic, dynamic culture of the West. Third is the Holocaust and the rebirth of a Jewish state in the Land of Israel.

A millennium ago 60-70% of the world's Jews lived in Muslim lands, from Spain and Morocco in the west to Persia in the east. Most of the rest lived in Christian countries north of the Mediterranean Sea. Smaller numbers lived in India and China. There was also a Jewish community living among the pagans in the Ukraine who were the descendants of numerous pagan Khazars who had converted to Judaism a century or two earlier.

Over the next 2-3 centuries the Jewish community in Muslim Spain grew in numbers and influence. Jewish scholarship of that period excelled in Hebrew poetry both religious and secular, Biblical commentary, and Jewish philosophy both rational and mystical. Rabbi Moses Maimonides, born 1135 in Spain, who lived most of his life in Cairo, was the most

influential rational philosopher in the last 1000 years. Rabbi Moses de Leon, 1240-1305, wrote and edited the most important single text of the Kabbalah (Jewish mysticism).

In the 14th and 15th centuries, as the Christians re-conquered more and more of Spain, the Jews were subjected to increasing efforts to convert them, sometimes forcibly, to Christianity. They resisted vigorously. Finally, in 1492, with the fall of the last Muslim stronghold in Spain, all the Jews in Spain who refused to become baptized were expelled from the country. A quarter million people became refugees. Although this was the worst of the expulsions of Jews from Christian lands it was not the first. Jews had already been expelled from England (1290), France (1394), Austria (1421), and several German Dukedoms (1426-1461). But these were smaller Jewish communities and not a vibrant center of Jewish culture and life as was the Spanish Jewish community. Also, in Spain, thousands of Jews had been forcibly baptized in previous generations and continued to practice Judaism in secret. The Inquisition vigorously pursued them and their children for many decades, adding to their tragedy, and drawing out their suffering.

Many of the Jews exiled from Spain ended up in the Ottoman Empire and some of them moved to the Land of Israel. Safed, a small town in northern Israel, became a major center for Kabbalistic studies. One of these sages, Rabbi Isaac Luria (1534-1572) developed a radically new system for understanding the nature of evil and suffering in the world. The Biblical and Talmudic rabbinic view of evil is that it is solely the result of immoral human decisions and activities. There is no source of evil outside of human beings. The natural world itself is good, not evil. Genesis I makes this clear by repeating again and again at each stage of the world's creation that "God saw that it was good". Not only is the physical world in general good, but marital sex, which is considered inherently negative in some religious traditions, is considered holy in Judaism. The Rabbis regard marital sex as a Mitsvah—a good deed/a sacred obligation. Sex was not a concession to human lust, justified by the need to procreate, and celibacy was not considered a higher spiritual state. Indeed, the Kabbalists maintained that God rejoiced when a man made love to his wife on the holy Sabbath day.

Finally, there is no evil power opposing God that can make people do evil. Satan in the Hebrew Bible is not the Devil.¹ Satan is an angel of God whose job is to tempt people in order to find out how committed they are to being good. If evil is not attractive there is no challenge to resisting evil and therefore no virtue in avoiding it. Satan is a metaphor for temptation: Foods that are healthy are not as tasty as those that are bad for you. Short-term benefits seem more attractive than long term benefits. Forbidden fruits seem sweeter. Indulgence feels better than self-restraint. None of this makes us do evil but it does make it harder to do good. The decision is always ours. This was the normative majority view within the Jewish tradition for almost three millennia.

Luria proposed a radically different view that rapidly became the dominant view within Kabbalistic thought. In our post holocaust world it has even spread beyond Kabbalistic circles. Luria saw evil as an inevitable flaw within the creative process itself. According to Lurianic Kabbalah when God created the universe, the infinite Divine energies overwhelmed the finite "vessels" of time, space, matter and energy. These shattered and thus became flawed. The Divine sparks became imbedded in the fragments of the vessels in the same way that kernels of grain are embedded in their husks. God knew that this must happen but there was no other way for the Infinite One to create a complex finite universe. However, God also knew that such a universe could produce, and it was the Divine intention that it should produce, creatures created in the Divine image, who would be able to mend the fractures and flaws of worldly existence. The fractures in the structure of reality, and the husks that encapsulate the sparks explain much of the evil and suffering we are subject to.

In modern terms the fractures explain why there often are unintended negative consequences from programs and activities that only seek to help people or why good intentions do not always bring about good results. The fractures are why one sibling suffers from a genetically influenced mental or physical disease while another sibling does not. The fractures are why some people have the bad luck to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. The fractures are why we often can see only in retrospect why we made the wrong decision for the right reason.

People attribute responsibility for events leading to and resulting from situations such as those referred to above as due totally to conscious moral choice when much of what people do in these circumstances is really the result of fractures beyond human control. Of course, most choices for most people most of the time are under our control so that most evils are the result of human decisions. But the big evils, the outrageous ones, and the unexplainable ones can now be accounted for. They are not simply the result of conscious human choice. Cosmic factors beyond our ken are also at work.

At the same time Luria's system also provides for a way to improve things. In modern terms, humans can use their God given intelligence to understand genetic diseases and devise cures, or to learn from history and experience how to reduce unintended negative consequences by changing things slowly and non-dogmatically. In traditional terms, Luria's system provided a way to mend and repair fractures in the universe. Each time one did a Mitzvah (one of God's commandments/a good deed/a Jewish obligation) it now also became a Tikun-an activity that repairs a fracture in existence.

Thus a Mitzvah was not only a way to make yourself or others into better people. Each Mitzvah that was done repaired a tiny crack somewhere in the cosmos. For example, a blessing recited over bread or wine not only elevated the awareness of the person reciting the blessing; it also mended a fractured Divine spark within the bread or wine, and thus elevated its purpose of providing nourishment. Thus each Mitzvah performed repaired a crack, not necessarily for oneself or for the Jewish community or even for the whole of humanity, but the Tikun could affect the natural world we live in, or even the heavenly worlds beyond us.

In the modern world Tikun is primarily thought of as either an act of personal self improvement (elevating ones moral and spiritual character) or an act which helps to improve society (politically, economically or environmentally). In the pre-modern undemocratic world social/political Tikun was impossible. The one attempt to use Lurianic Kabbalah and Tikun to change the world was a movement led by Rabbi Shabbetai Zevi (1626-1676) and Rabbi Nathan of Gaza (1643-1680) which generated widespread Messianic anticipation, and produced a spiritual disaster when Shabbetai Zevi converted to Islam in order to save his life. In the aftermath

of this debacle Kabbalistic thinking was discredited and was confined to small closed circles until the middle of the 20th century. In the aftermath of the Holocaust Luria's ideas are once again gaining some popularity. There is even an American magazine titled *Tikun* which advocates both personal spiritual *Tikun* as well as social/political *Tikun*.

Most of the Jews who had been expelled from Spain in 1492 and from Portugal in 1496 fled, to Muslim lands in North Africa and the Middle East. In the 17th and 18th centuries these Muslim lands began to decline economically due to the Western European opening of sea trade routes to India and the discovery and conquest of the Americas. At the same time that the Muslim world was in decline, the Western European nations entered a long period of economic, technological, and cultural growth. Since the Jews had been expelled from these countries centuries earlier, for the first time in Jewish history, the center of the Jewish people was not located within the most advanced center of western civilization. In the Biblical period the Jewish people lived in the Fertile Crescent where western society first originated. During the Greco-Roman period the majority of Jews lived in the Hellenized eastern end of the Mediterranean. When the Roman Empire declined and Arab invaders established a new and dynamic empire the majority of Jews lived in Muslim lands. Now the majority of Jews lived in Eastern Europe, which was not a part of the dynamic developments occurring in the west, or in Muslim countries now in decline. The result was that in the 19th and 20th centuries Jews were unprepared to face modern Western civilization. In this Jews were not different from many other societies throughout the world that faced this major challenge to their traditional culture and religion. But because Jews were a mostly urbanized minority they faced it more rapidly and more overwhelmingly than almost anyone else did. The successes and failures of their reactions may serve as lessons for other religious and ethnic cultural groups.

The first significant Jewish communities to encounter the modern world were those located in central Europe, primarily in German speaking lands. The modernizers' reaction was to develop religious reform. The major period of formal religious reforms took place in the five decades between 1820 and 1870 in most, but not all Jewish communities in German lands, and in the United States where many German Jews

immigrated during the middle of the 19th century. The reformers split into two groups towards the end of this period. The Conservatives were satisfied with most of the changes made thus far and did not see the need for further or more radical change. The radicals, who kept the name Reform, pushed for greater changes. By the end of the century the split between the Reform and the Conservatives had led to separate rabbinical associations and seminaries. In the United States, where traditional Judaism was almost non-existent, the Reform movement became dominant. However, with the emigration of almost two million Jews from Eastern Europe to the United States in the three decades prior to World War One, Reform Jews became a minority and Conservative Jews became the majority by the middle decades of the 20th century. By the end of the 20th century American Reform Jews had again become a slight majority.

The traditionalist reaction to the first moderate reforms in Europe was total opposition. They stressed the divine nature of all tradition, even of customs that had originated in recent centuries. Although Judaism had undergone many changes in the four millennia of its history, consciousness of change had slowed down significantly in the previous centuries due to the isolation of Jewish communities from the dynamic centers of western civilization. Those opposed to change considered themselves orthodox and became known as the Orthodox. In the 19th century very few Orthodox Rabbis were willing to immigrate to the New World. Thus they forfeited the opportunity to influence the development of Judaism in the new communities that would become a major part of the Jewish People in the post-holocaust generations. The Orthodox, especially in Eastern Europe, refused to learn or use the local languages. They insisted in trying to preserve the use of Hebrew and Yiddish. Thus, they cut themselves off from the younger generations that rarely knew enough Hebrew or Yiddish to understand their arguments, and who viewed their, commitment to the languages of the past as an example of backwardness.

By the 1920's the majority of Jews in the world were non-Orthodox and almost everyone expected that in another 2-3 generations there would be no Orthodox Jews at all. In Germany, England and in the United States the Orthodox had already become a minority by the end of the 19th century, but in Eastern Europe and in Muslim countries very little reform occurred. Significant reforms did not take place in Jewish communities

living in Roman Catholic or Eastern Orthodox countries where the churches also resisted change. In those countries large numbers of people left the church and many joined anti-clerical socialist and nationalist political parties, Italy and France are good examples. Similarly, many Jews in Eastern Europe became anti-religious and joined Jewish socialist or secular Zionist political parties. Modernization had barely begun in Muslim lands in the 19th century so no religious reforms occurred there.

Then historical events in the three generations following 1917 made a big difference in Jewish life and thought. The Russian revolution of 1917 began a long period of violent political and cultural change in the world, which was in sharp contrast to the largely peaceful economic, scientific and cultural changes which had characterized the century between 1815 and 1914. The 1917 Balfour Declaration marked the beginning of international legal recognition for the Zionist movement, which would result in a Hebrew speaking State of Israel where the Orthodox had a better chance to flourish. Due to these major historical events religious reform continued throughout the 20th century but not in the direction 19th century reformers had anticipated. Let us look at some specific changes that were introduced by the 19th century Reformers, rejected by the Orthodox and accepted to some degree by the Conservative. We will then see how the Reform, and even the Orthodox, have changed in the two generations since the Holocaust.

WOMEN- All traditional cultures provide for major differences in male and female roles. In Jewish society, as in many others, the roles had become less favorable for women over the centuries. For example, in Biblical days there were female prophets (Miriam, Deborah, Huldah, etc.) but in post-Biblical days the Rabbis were exclusively male. Other differences such as separation of men and women during prayer go back to the very beginnings of the Jewish People. Sometimes an acceptable solution was found by reverting back to much earlier ways of doing things. Sometimes venerable traditions were abandoned as "not adapted to the views and habits of modern civilization".

Thus separate seating of men and women during worship was changed to mixed family seating. This innovation started among Reform Jews in America in the 1850's and 1860's and spread to American Conservative Jews and to German Reform Jews in the next few decades. A

bigger problem was Jewish divorce law, which gave the right to divorce only to the husband. Reform Rabbis took the radical path of simply declaring a Jewish divorce unnecessary. A civil divorce would be sufficient. The Conservatives could not accept such an open break with Jewish law, which they believed could be modified but not abrogated. They could not work out an acceptable solution to the problem until the 20th century. In a traditional Jewish marriage ceremony the bride played a passive roll. A more active roll replaced this with the bride speaking her vows and giving as well as receiving a ring.

Although the Jewish community had achieved almost universal Jewish literacy by the first century this was limited to males. Only with the Rise of the Reform movement was religious education extended to include girls. German Jews created a special ceremony called Confirmation in the 1820's to celebrate the graduation of both boys and girls from religious school. It spread to include Conservative Jews and even some Modern Orthodox Jews in America. Confirmation was the first Jewish ceremony in Jewish history to treat males and females equally. In 1871 a conference of Reform Rabbis in Germany formally declared women eligible to serve as witnesses in ritual legal matters. Although in theory that made it possible for women to become Rabbis, few made the attempt, and none succeeded in receiving ordination from a Rabbinical school until a century later. The reforms of the 19th century met the needs of 19th century women. The 20th century would provide new challenges and new solutions.

SACRED LANGUAGE- Hebrew had become the only language of prayer and the public reading of scripture although early Jewish law specifically states that one may pray in any language and scripture was always both read and translated during services at that time. Reform Jews introduced prayers and songs in the local language and scriptural readings during services were translated. A sermon in the local language was also introduced. However, the Reformers split over how much Hebrew to retain in the service. The radicals wanted Hebrew to be symbolic; just a small part of the service. The more conservative Reformers wanted most of the service to be in Hebrew. They viewed religion as more romantic/emotional/poetic and favored Hebrew. The radicals viewed religion as more philosophical, rational and practical and they could see little use for Hebrew. The issues of how much Hebrew and the authority of

Jewish law, were the most important ones that led to the conservatives parting from the radical Reformers during the second half of the 19th century and calling themselves Traditional or Conservative Jews.

DIET and DRESS-Women stopped covering their head with a scarf or a wig and men stopped covering their head with a hat or a small cap. Women stopped wearing clothes that covered their arms and legs and men stopped wearing a fringed undergarment. Both men and women dressed in western style fashions. Most Reform Jews ceased eating kosher food. First they stopped separating milk and meat products. Then they stopped buying kosher meat that had been slaughtered according to rabbinic rules. Then many, but not all, even began eating pork. The 1885 platform of American Reform Jews boldly stated, "We hold that all such Mosaic and rabbinical laws as regulate diet and dress originated in ages and under the influences of ideas altogether foreign to our present mental and spiritual state. Their observance in our days is apt rather to obstruct than to further modern spiritual elevation." Conservative Rabbis accepted the changes in dress but resisted strongly the abandonment of a kosher diet. This was one of the major differences between Reform and Conservative synagogues in the first half of the 20th century.

WORSHIP-All reform synagogues began to use mixed gender choirs, an organ and western style sacred music. Some Conservative synagogues did some of these things. Services were shortened and prayer-books were extensively revised in Reform congregations. The Conservatives made very few changes. Modern Rabbis were expected to also have a secular university degree by all non-orthodox congregations. Even the Modern Orthodox expected this. Modern Rabbinical schools were established.

In the 20th century religious reform continued but not in the direction that 19th century reformers had anticipated. In the century between the end of the Napoleonic wars and the beginning of World War 1, Europe experienced a fantastic period of peace, prosperity and progress. Many Reform Jews thought that the Messianic Age was beginning. The dark side of rapid technological, economic, demographic, social and cultural change was not anticipated. Thus the intellectual world in the late 20th century was very different from the previous century.

Many traditions that had been dropped as irrational or inappropriate to modern sensibilities are being restored by a generation seeking warm, colorful ceremonies. Modern thought has developed a major stream of severe self-criticism that made it easier to justify acting in non-modern ways. For example, 19th century Reform Rabbis had discouraged the custom of ending a Jewish wedding with the breaking of a glass because historical research had indicated that the custom grew out of a medieval superstition that demons would kidnap the bride or make the groom impotent on the wedding night. Thus European Rabbis had opposed the custom, but failing to suppress it, had given it a more elevated spiritual interpretation by claiming that the glass was broken in memory of the destruction of Jerusalem and its Holy Temple. We are to remember that even amidst joy there are occasional sorrows, thus marriage partners must be committed to each other in good times as well as bad. For Reform Rabbis the loss of the ancient Temple in Jerusalem in the year 70 was not a great tragedy, and the superstitious origins of the custom meant it had no place in a modern enlightened religion. Westerners nowadays are open to non-rational experiences as long as they like them. Breaking the glass is festive, so new interpretations have been given to the breaking of a glass and its origins are considered irrelevant.

Starting in the 1880's the Zionist movement gave a new impetus to the revival of the Hebrew language. After a steady decrease in the percentage of Hebrew in Reform prayer-books in the century between 1820's and the 1920's, the percentage of Hebrew has been steadily rising. Although Reform prayer-books still have much more English than Hebrew in them, beginning in the 1970's they were printed in two versions: one opening from right to left (Hebrew style) and one opening from left to right (English style). About 1/3 of sales in the 1980's were Hebrew opening and by the late 1990's it was close to half-and-half. This is a clear example of Israel's influence since both versions are the same. The only factors are the psychological ones i.e., identification with real/modern Israeli books, and do we want to be a little different from our non-Jewish neighbors or not. Visiting and studying in Israel has made Hebrew and intensive Jewishness more salient to young people growing up within a non-Jewish majority culture. In 1998/1999 almost 3,300 American college students (80-90% Jewish) studied for a semester or a year in Israeli universities. Another 2,500 modern Orthodox youth studied in an

Orthodox Yeshiva after finishing high school. More than 22,000 18-26 year olds visited Israel for ten days subsidized by the Birthright Israel program in 1999-2000. Thousands of others go on other programs each year. In the 1960's and 1970's the socialist Kibbutz inspired most young people visiting Israel. In the 1980's and 1990's Orthodox outreach programs became the main influence.

Some people think that the Reform movement's return to tradition in the last half of the 20th century is simply a normal reaction to having gone too far in its 19th century radical zeal. This is partly true. Some people think that it is a reaction to the renewed vitality displayed by Orthodox Jews in America and in Israel. This too is partly true. But in some areas Reform Rabbis are becoming even more radical. This is due to continuing developments in western society. In the 1970's the first women ever to be ordained as Rabbis graduated from a Reform seminary. In the 1980's the Conservative seminary began ordaining female Rabbis. By the beginning of the 21st century all non-Orthodox Rabbinical schools had almost as many female as male students. In one sense this was the logical outcome of instituting Confirmation for both girls and boys in the first half of the 19th century and declaring women eligible to be legal witnesses in 1871. Still it took another half century, until the 1920's and 1930's, for the first Bat Mitzvah (female) ceremonies to be held. The central part of the Bar Mitzvah (male) ceremony is the public reading of Scripture in Hebrew while conducting the service. Since the Reform had substantially reduced the Hebrew component of the service fewer and fewer boys became Bar Mitzvah in Reform Congregations. Conservative synagogues still emphasized Hebrew and it was within the liberal wing of the Conservative movement that Bat Mitzvah originated. By the 1970's most non-Orthodox girls were becoming Bat Mitzvah. Some of them were inspired to become Rabbis and within a decade or two they were widely accepted in the non-Orthodox community. These trends coincided with, and were made easier by, the feminist movement in most western countries.

Gay rights was another powerful social and political movement in the last third of the 20th Century. Most Jews in the western world are political and social liberals so it is not surprising that they are more supportive of Gay issues than most non-Jews. In 1977, 43% of Americans said they thought homosexual relations between consenting adults should

be legal. In 2001, 54% of Americans say they should be legal. The Jewish percentage in both years was about 20-25 points higher than the non-Jewish percentage. About a dozen Gay congregations were formed in the 1980's and 1990's. The Conservative movement would not let them affiliate so all of them that are affiliated are Reform. There is an explicit Mitsvah against homosexuality in the Torah so it is hard for the Conservatives to openly recognize Gay synagogues or ordain openly gay rabbinical students. Since the Reform movement has openly abrogated Jewish law in many areas this is not so hard.

Outreach to non-Jews is another area where the Reform movement has become less traditional. In the 19th century the Reform movement stressed the mission of the Jewish People to be a blessing to the non-Jewish world. Most Reform Jews regarded this as a Mitsvah to set a good example and to influence society toward liberalism. Only a few took it to mean trying to influence individual non-Jews to become Jewish. Traditional Judaism has always accepted converts but rarely actively sought them. Most converts to Judaism are initially involved romantically with a Jew. Although the majority of non-Jews who marry Jews do not become Jewish, or raise their children as Jews, (which is why since Biblical days there has been such strong opposition to exogamy in Jewish tradition) 10-20% do. By the early decades of the 20th century exogamy was common in central Europe, but the long tradition of anti-Semitism made most Jews too insecure in their own faith to openly encourage an outsider to join them. America is different. When exogamy became wide spread in the 1970's and 1980's the Reform movement began to program some outreach activities. Studies of the American Jewish population indicate that more than 200,000 non-Jews have converted to Judaism (3-4% of America's 6,000,000 Jews). Outreach programs have directly influenced very few of them.

Conversion to Judaism is one of the most contentious issues between the Orthodox and the non-Orthodox. The Orthodox do not recognize any of the changes and innovations introduced by the non-Orthodox as legitimate. They regard only those converted by Orthodox Rabbis as being Jewish. This becomes a political issue in Israel where marriage and divorce are in the hands of the Orthodox. In the U.S. they have no power over the non-Orthodox. However, they often deny use of Orthodox

facilities such as the ritual bath, which is used in conversion. Those Orthodox Rabbis who performed circumcisions for the entire community refused to do them for non-Orthodox converts. In 1984, the Reform movement in America started training its own people, both male and female to do circumcision. This program has trained and certified over 225 physicians and certified nurse midwives who have in turn performed over 10,000 ceremonies of circumcision.

Exogamy, gay rights and feminism are three examples of the influence of trends in general society affecting non-Orthodox communities. However, much of what has occurred in Judaism in the last two generations is due to Jewish historical conditions.

The general tendency in non-Orthodox movements has been to increase the observance of traditional rituals and customs. In part this is a reaction to the revitalization of Orthodox Judaism in the decades following the Holocaust and the rebirth of the State of Israel. The Orthodox realized that intensive Jewish education was essential to their survival. In the decades following World War 2 they expanded the number of all day Jewish schools. By the late 1970's, most children of Orthodox families were enrolled in over 500 Orthodox Day Schools in North America. Their success led the Conservative movement and even the Reform to follow. The Conservatives had 17 Day Schools in 1964, 64 by 1982, and over 100 by the late 1990's (including community schools which are basically conservative). The Reform movement had long opposed Day Schools so it's first Day School did not open until 1970; by 1982 there were a dozen and by the late 1990's almost 20. By 1999 total enrollment in Jewish Day Schools of all denominations from kindergarten to 12th grade was over 170,000. It should be noted that during this period the number of students in the much larger Catholic parochial school system declined, so the rise of Jewish Day Schools is not simply due a trend in American society to private education. The non-Orthodox denominations also learned that the informal but more emotionally intensive experience of overnight camps was an important factor in strengthening Jewish identity. By the year 2000 there were about 120 Jewish overnight summer camps serving about 50,000 children for a period of one week to one month.

The recent revival of Orthodox Judaism parallels to some extent the resurgence of religion in general and evangelical Protestantism in

particular. The search for direct personal religious experience has characterized many young people since the 1960's. The gradual loss of faith in liberal secular humanism, which seems to be worldwide, makes people open to traditional claims to authority. Churchgoing among both adults and teens has been on an upswing. Weekly Bible reading is also on an upward curve. Increases are noted in the percentage of people holding traditional Christian beliefs, such as belief in heaven and hell. The latest audit of denominational preferences in the U.S. reveals a leveling out, and even an upturn, in the strength of certain mainline Protestant denominations after a three decade long slide. A consistent two-thirds of Americans maintains that religion can answer all or most of today's problems. In addition 3rd and 4th generation American Jews no longer need to prove they are American, so they seek more Jewish identification. For example, many Jews 2 or 3 generations ago wore a Jewish symbol like a six pointed star. But most wore it inside their shirt. Now most wear it outside. Visits to Israel by young people for touring and for study have increased very significantly since the 1960's.

All of these developments have strengthened Orthodox Judaism and influenced the non-Orthodox toward traditionalism. Yet at the beginning of the 21st century less than 10% of North American Jewry was Orthodox compared to about 40% for Reform Jews and about 35% for Conservative Jews. Two 20th century movements, Reconstructionism and Renewal, make up 2-3% and about 15% are just Jewish or secular. In Catholic countries in Europe and in Latin America the percentage of secular Jews is much higher (half or more) and the non-Orthodox religious movements much smaller. In Israel the Orthodox make up 20-25% of the Jewish population and the secular are about 70%. Those formally affiliated with Reform and Conservative synagogues are only 1% of the population but another 5-10% describe themselves as Reform thinking. Jews from Muslim lands and their children are a little over half of the Jews in Israel and most of them are Orthodox. Israeli and American Jewry live in very different societies yet they will greatly influence each other's religious development in the 21st century.

I have already mentioned several ways that the Holocaust and the rebirth of the State of Israel have influenced contemporary Judaism. Both acted to strengthen the ethnic component within Judaism. Hebrew needs to

be used and taught not just as a sacred tongue but also as a modern language spoken by the Jews in the land of Israel according to the most recent platform (1999) of the Reform Movement. Most post-modern Jews have rejected the uncritical acceptance of modern western culture as the standard to judge Judaism. The 1885 platform says, "We recognize in the modern era of universal culture of heart and intellect the approaching of the realization of Israel's great messianic hope". The 1976 platform says, "The Holocaust shattered our easy optimism about humanity and its inevitable progress." It also states, "the spiritual emptiness of much of Western culture has taught us to be less dependent on the values of our society and to reassert what remains perennially valid in Judaism's teaching." Jews reacted even more favorably than Christians to Western humanistic values in the century prior to the Holocaust. Now they seemed more critical of them.

The most obvious change in Jewish life has been the demographic one. In the three decades prior to World war 1 and 2, ½ million Jews emigrated from Central and Eastern Europe primarily to the United States but also to Latin America, Western Europe and the Land of Israel. Then the Holocaust wiped out 2/3 of the Jews of Central and Eastern Europe. In 1940 there were about eighteen million Jews in the world. Five and a half million lived in the U.S. and Canada, ten million in Central and Eastern Europe, one million in Muslim lands, three quarters of a million in Western Europe, and over a half million in the Land of Israel. In the year 2000 the total worldwide Jewish population was only thirteen million. Six million Jews live in the U.S. and Canada, and over five million in the State of Israel. Over one million Jews live in Western Europe and in Latin America. Only about one million still reside in Central and Eastern Europe and in Muslim countries. Given the low birth rates and high rates of exogamy in Western Jewry, the Jews in the Land of Israel will be a majority within the next few decades. Since half the population of Israel are Jews from Muslim lands and their descendants, Israeli religious culture is much less Western than American Jewry. It will take another 2-3 generations to see how these differences will develop.

Thus it is too soon to see the full impact of the Holocaust and the Rebirth of the State of Israel on Jewish thought and life. It is also too soon to perceive how the globalization of culture and religion will influence all

world religions. First, the rapid pace of change in our society makes change the norm, and thus makes it harder for timeless teachings and traditions to go unchallenged. Second, those religions that think that their teaching is the universal solution for all humanity will increasingly be faced with the challenge of democratic cultural and ethical pluralism. This is especially true as emigration and immigration change societies demographically. To say that the One is called by many names is a step in the right direction, but it still denies that there are radically different and even contradictory paths to salvation/enlightenment/redemption. Since Jews are already an international community with a long tradition of being a minority culture in a pluralistic world, they will probably be among the first to react to the challenges of the 21st century and the new millennium I have no idea what the future holds. I do believe that the Jewish people will creatively adapt to it just as it has to every new civilization that has arisen since the days of the ancient Babylonians and Egyptians four millennia ago. I do believe that the next few centuries may be the most significant ones in the long history of the descendants of Adam and Eve. The Messianic Age will come. Peace will prevail.