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After fifteen years—my world

Michael Wyschogrod

During the fifteen years that have passed since *Sh'ma* was born, much has changed both in the world and my perception of the world.

I now consider the danger of nuclear war the greatest danger hanging over our heads. It is ironic that the greatest danger facing Jews today is not a specifically Jewish one. Jews are so accustomed to being singled out for persecution and destruction that it is understandably difficult for them to entertain the possibility that the greatest catastrophe in Jewish history might be an event in which Jews are just incidental participants. I am not sure I know what we (Jews and non-Jews) must do to avert this danger. But I am sure that we should be spending the largest part of our time and energy thinking of ways to awaken governments and peoples to this unspeakable peril. I cannot understand why so little attention is paid to this problem.

In 1970, Jews were just coming down from the high precipitated by the Six Day War. The 1973 war brought us back to reality again and this has been with us ever since. I am now less inclined to believe in the possibility of a "solution" to the Arab-Israeli problem than before. In fact, the very conviction that a solution is possible may be causing considerable damage. The Middle East is just not an area where solutions happen. The Iraq-Iran war has been dragging on for four years with close to a million dead so far. Lebanon is in worse shape than ever. Bloodletting may just be a way of life in the Middle East and the very conviction that a solution is around the corner may only encourage people fighting for lost causes to fight even harder.

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A more realistic level of expectations may not only avert much disappointment but also avert such adventures as the Israeli action in Lebanon which was probably, in part, caused by the Western idea that a "solution" to the Lebanese problem was possible.

Our Fellow Jews, Abroad and Here

Which brings me to the situation of Soviet Jewry. Anatoly Sharansky has now been in prison over eight years and we have accepted it. Of course, we have not liked it. There have been rallies and advertisements, the U.S. and other governments have been influenced to raise the matter at meetings with Soviet officials and so on. But Sharansky is still rotting in prison. And as things look now, we will not do very much more no matter how long he rots in Soviet prisons. I find this situation unacceptable. I do not know how to get Sharansky (with whom I spent a day in Moscow in 1976) out of prison. But I do know that it is our duty to try harder, until it hurts. It is not our duty to get him out of prison. But it is our duty to hurt ourselves trying to get him out of prison. That is the only measure of our commitment that counts. Everything else is cheap. I would very much like to talk to people who have some sympathy for what I have just said.

Looking at the Jewish religious scene in this country, I am deeply disturbed by developments in the Conservative movement. Until recently, there were three branches of Judaism in this country. While for a long time Conservative Judaism has been taking liberties with *halacha* that I could not approve, one still had the feeling that the movement was anchored in loyalty to Torah. In spite of everything, it was not difficult to distinguish it from Reform Judaism. This is becoming far less the case. While the boundary between Reform and Conservatism has not yet been totally eliminated, it has certainly been made less sharp. The die was cast, I think, when Conservatism joined Reform in the campaign to maintain Israeli recognition of non-Orthodox conversions. If Conservative Judaism is willing to recognize Reform conversions, then will it not very soon also embrace the Reform position on patrilineal transmission of Judaism? If so, the fusion of the two movements cannot be too far in the future.

The absorption of Conservative Judaism by Reform would be a major step toward the polarization of the Jewish people into a segment committed to Torah in the traditional sense and one eager to shape a new Judaism unhindered by the tradition. This can only lead to tragic results.

The Fresh Pain of Exile

I am beginning to entertain the idea that the most significant fact of Jewish history since 1948 is the refusal of the vast majority of the Jews of the free world to settle in Israel. It may just be possible that by not choosing *aliyah*, we are passing a death sentence on Israel. Even if, in theory, a vital diaspora Judaism is possible under present circumstances when every Jew who wishes to settle in Israel can do so, given the realities of the situation in the Middle East, an influx of 6-8 million Jews into the land may be the only way of maintaining the Jewishness of the country. The refusal of the Jews of the free world to vote for Israel with their feet is an immensely significant decision, probably symptomatic of a serious erosion of the Jewish will to live.

It is, of course, always possible to rewrite Judaism by eliminating the sense of exile and the hope and will to return to the land from which our ancestors were evicted. But that is tampering with the soul of the faith. To consider oneself permanently American by nationality and Jewish by religion is to bring Judaism to its conclusion. But this is, in fact, what most of us have done. And I am speaking here, first and foremost, about myself. I have certainly not done any of this consciously. If asked, I would certainly say that I am in exile in the U. S. and argue vehemently against those who would deny this. But is all this not simply cheap talk? Whatever my mouth says, my actions prove that I do not consider Israel my homeland. And this causes me no end of anguish. □

After fifteen years—my mind

Seymour Siegel

It is hard to believe that fifteen years have already passed since *Sh'ma* was founded. These have been fateful years indeed for all of us. As I look back now on the decade and a half since our first issue I believe that my mind has changed in two directions. In the political realm I have definitely become more *right wing*. In the religious realm my mind has become more *left wing*.

What that means practically is that where political and social issues are concerned, I tend more than usual to favor the conservative position. At the

SEYMOUR SIEGEL assures us that his recuperation is coming along nicely, allowing him to resume teaching Jewish theology and ethics at the Jewish Theological Seminary. He is a founding Contributing Editor of *Sh'ma*.

present time that means alignment with the Reagan administration and its policies. In domestic matters that involves reliance on the free enterprise tradition. In foreign affairs it means maintenance of a strong national defense against the Soviets, especially through the maintenance of nuclear armaments so that there is maintained a rough parity with the Soviets. And in social issues it involves emphasis on traditional values such as the value of human life; the introduction of a religious dimension in the common life of the nation (that is, an abandonment of a rigid and unyielding attitude toward the church-state issue); support of a close scrutiny of programs designed to help the underprivileged; and a strict enforcement of standards of fairness in employment (that is, no preferential treatment of "minorities"). In short, an endorsement of the rightward direction of the contemporary political climate.

Fifteen years ago I felt myself to be much more insistent on halachic conformity. Though I welcome the traditional emphasis in the Reform movement, I realize that halachic rigidity should not be seen as an end in itself but as a means toward in-

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creased Jewishness, spirituality and humaneness. It is clear to me now that insistence on halachic norms which leads to human difficulty and self satisfied "hardness of heart" is not very Jewish, or even halachic in the deepest and most profound sense.

Two Cases Requiring Renewal

I suppose the factor that has been most important in the development of my thinking in this matter has been the emergence of the women's movement in Jewish life, especially at the Jewish Theological Seminary. Try as one would, I am convinced that strict adherence to the demands of *halacha* would not permit the important changes in synagogue life which the past period has brought about. I am not bothered by that now. For it is clear in my mind, at least, that if strict halachic conformance frustrates our highest and best human instincts, then the halachic considerations should be secondary and yield to ethics and *menshlichkeit*.

Just this past week, in the State of Israel, I saw a dramatic example of this. The Ethiopian Jews, a proud and beautiful tribe of our people, have been sorely vexed because the rabbinic authorities in Israel have expressed doubts about their halachic integrity and demand a *pro forma* religious ritual before the Ethiopians can be accepted as full Jews. The recent immigrants have rejected this demand with vigor, dignity and determination. I say, "More power to them!"

When *halacha* functions as it always had, to sensitize people to the Divine, then it has some claim to call itself "divine." When Jewish law makes us insensitive, less human and more prone to withhold human rights from our fellowmen, then it has lost its claim to primacy in Jewish life.

I have cited two examples where this is the case—women's rights and the status of hitherto cast off tribes. Many more examples could be cited. This is not the place or the time to compile such a list. But I hope my point is clear. *Halacha is a means, not an end in itself.* The means should be judged by the ends.

So my thinking on this matter has moved towards the left.

The Basis for the Paradox

Now I am sure the reader is asking, "Is this not inconsistent? How can a person move toward the right in politics and toward the left in religious matters?"

I have searched my mind to find some common thread to account for the seemingly contradictory

direction of my thinking. The answer at which I arrived is: *realism*.

The besetting error of liberal political thinking is the tendency to see issues in non-realistic terms. To make real and meaningful political choices is to make choices between real alternatives, not desired alternatives. You choose between real options; not imagined or idealized ones. Thus, for example, it is, of course, right and moral to oppose racial discrimination in South Africa. But a sudden transition to "one man, one vote," it is clear to sober observers, would mean chaos, dictatorship and worse suffering. So the more realistic moralist would seek options other than the trendy sloganeering of the liberals.

The same is true regarding the halachic problems facing us. It is not the exact halachic norms that should be primary but the goals of the Law, indeed of Judaism, which are to follow the *derekh Hashem* (the way of the Lord), *laasot tzedakah umishpat* (to do righteousness and justice).

As many of my friends know, I write these lines recuperating from a hospital stay. My remarks therefore, are partial and slightly undeveloped. But I do hope the trend of my thought is clear enough to indicate the direction of my mind in these crucial and troubling times. □

After fifteen years—my self

Arnold Jacob Wolf

Half a generation ago I was proud, repentant, neofrum, sharply critical and politically left. I still am, but it is harder and harder to feel secure in my views. All the terrible dangers we foresaw for Israel as an embattled and expansionist state have come true. All the deep divisions in American Jewish thinking that we both prophesied and enacted have come to visibility and to a kind of permanent crisis. The sacred texts that I have pondered for all these years seem to me more profound but also more enigmatic than ever. My own personal life is barely intact and gives no promise for a serenity to come. At sixty plus, I should have become more wise as well as more learned and more mature. I have not.

Therefore, I am, in compensation perhaps, more trusting of God and less sanguine about my fellow humans and my fellow Jews. The Administration is as dangerous as any I could have imagined in

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America, and the spectre of Kahane looms above Israel. Reform Judaism is still confused and semi-literate. Orthodoxy is corrupt and reactionary. Socialism is a utopian ideal, democracy a slogan and a wondrous delusion. Psychotherapy cannot heal. Faith cannot save. My heart is as deceitful as yours and my program as improbable as any. We created *Sh'ma* as an outpost of liberalism and the traditionalists have dominated its pages for a decade. Breira failed to rally the left. Women rabbis have not refashioned the pulpit. We did not expect victory, but we had no taste of the bitterness of defeat.

God is what He will be. I am not what I meant to become. I love my congregation, my children, my students and my friends, and they love me. We are not ashamed of what we tried to accomplish. But we know that what might have been will never be—in our lifetime, at least. I go on, not only with persistence but even with a will, because that is what a Jew must do. I continue to study books that are harder to understand than when I was forty, and to teach people who are more eager and willing than their predecessors but also more embattled. I read *Sh'ma* with a good deal of pain, but I love its pages, too, and I am proud of being a part of this anniversary. I know about death now, at least. I am not so afraid as I once was of life.

You cannot imitate me. Even I no longer can. But all of us have a Way and a Goal which, if we cannot reach them, we also must not desert. Now, still, after all these years, we need not accomplish any sacred task to its completion, but again and again, we are commanded to begin. □

After fifteen years—my view

Eugene B. Borowitz

My biggest surprise—and disappointment—over the past fifteen years has been American Jewish liberalism's inability to reestablish its intellectual foundations. The same, largely aging voices sound the old battle cries to oppose the conservatives' lively defense of old structures and traditional values.

This general American phenomenon has hit the Jewish community with special impact because of our fresh interest in Jewish authenticity. Liberals are asked, "What's Jewish about your liberal, universalistic concern?" Or, "Is it good for the

EUGENE B. BOROWITZ, was the principal founder of *Sh'ma* and has been its Editor since its inception. But like all its other writers he speaks only for himself.

Jews?" And if by that is meant what's good for the State of Israel, harsh ethical consequences can follow: guns over butter, cold-war over detente, and reserving our political clout for pro-Israel, anti-Arab issues. Liberals have tried to make a case for both/and but the political atmosphere of our time has made their position difficult to hold consistently.

If, too, halachic texts are demanded to authenticate a position, then liberalism can only offer wisps of tradition. Jewish law, like all law, is essentially conservative—though one may marvel that, since its classic texts originate in times of economic scarcity and Jewish oppression, it has its undoubted liberal currents. Jewish liberalism, we need to remember, arose as a result of the Emancipation. It begins from the faith that the grant of equality, for all its limits, lays a new commandment on Jews. Having full democratic rights, we should manifest an expanded social horizon, and having economic strength, we should manifest substantial mutuality. But quoting the Prophets has limited validity in what we know to be a rabbinic religion.

The Philosophical Credibility Gap

Despite these intellectual difficulties, the most American Jews have not become socially conservative (thus, perhaps, teaching thinkers some greater humility). Immediately after the last presidential election Jewish rightists began lamenting the stubborn insistence of American Jews on voting as liberals. And individual issues, like Vietnamese boat people, nuclear disarmament and sanctuary (see the next number of *Sh'ma*) can still generate considerable activism. In the face of this recidivism, conservatives console themselves with the statistics showing Jewish college students have moved to the right. Liberals retort that they know the syndrome. Their own trendy youthful activism has turned into yuppiedom and suburbanitis but the basic American Jewish liberal orientation has refused to die.

As I read it, this gap between commitment and theory testifies to the reality of an underlying insight which awaits conceptualization. If young religious liberals today devote themselves to action rather than theorizing, they have good Jewish warrant for so doing. But our community will long retain its strong ethical thrust if we do not explicate its grounds.

Such a new ethics of Jewish liberalism must confront two nettlesome questions: how and on what grounds should we define Jewish duty today when we find *halacha* inadequate to our deepest sense of

Covenant responsibility? and what imperative impels us to do this Jewish duty? The one question forces us to confront how we might extend classic *halacha*, the other, what we believe about God. No wonder most thinkers find it difficult to offer a fresh philosophy of Jewish obligation. Having, myself, frequently written about these matters in *Sh'ma* and elsewhere (e.g., "The Autonomous Jewish Self," *Modern Judaism*, Feb., 1984) let me now rather look toward the future and make some comments about the prospects of the social right.

The Waning Appeal of Social Conservatism

Though my hopes in this regard have been thwarted several times already, I am now reasonably well convinced that conservatism's greatest influence has passed. In part such ebbing of power befalls all cultural movements. They are most appealing as critics of past excesses. So conservatism's greatest strength has been its telling critique of liberalism's failures. But many of those lessons have now been learned. Today, I find liberals cautious about their goals, realistic about costs and appropriately sceptical about theories of how to cure social problems. So familiarity and cooptation have made conservatism less exciting than it was.

Then too, as they have sought to articulate a program of their own, conservatives have lost their image of moral superiority. There is something mean-spirited about a tax program that gives the rich greater advantage while the deficit budget increases the holes in the safety net for the poor. Does respect for life indeed mean denying abortions to rape or incest victims because their unwanted pregnancies are not life threatening? Does the circulation of sexually explicit material cause such character damage that we should risk a return to the banning of books like James Joyce's *Ulysses*? Surely Jerry Falwell scaled some peak of spiritual hubris when he recently traveled to South Africa to give it spiritual sanction—and that at a time when the egregiousness of *apartheid* had become so apparent that even our conservative Secretary of State publicly denounced it.

Facing the Excesses of the Right

However, the most significant reason for the move to the center has been the growing evidence of humane conservatism's easy slide into rightist fanaticism. It is easiest to see as the religious roots of the right begin producing extremism. Gush Emunim once inspired much admiration in world Jewry; most of it has evaporated as an increasingly provocative assertion of Jewish rights culminated

in efforts, under the guise of self defense, to blow up Arab buses at rush hour. Less dramatically, our Jewish turn from an American culture going pagan toward *halacha* has stalled as the sages, instead of displaying flexibility on women's rights in Judaism have instead challenged the feminist's motives.

I cannot help but see this as a logical development of the religious position involved. If God gave the Law and established the proper instrument for its exposition, then believers will necessarily use terms like development, evolution and creativity quite differently than do liberals. For where the fundamentals of the faith are at stake, including who may explicate the Law and how, God must be defended at all cost. It makes no difference that no specific, classic text prohibits the modern aberration suggested—even with their terseness of expression, the sages could hardly have listed all the abominations promoted by the contemporary love of license. By goyish standards, some sacrifice of self is called for. But has it not been this very will to sacrifice that has kept Judaism alive? and is not this devotion to Jewishness, so appallingly absent in many of the non-Orthodox, that made the traditional alternative so attractive?

I think that states one great source of Orthodoxy's fresh appeal—but it also indicates its accompanying problem. How much sacrifice? Rejecting American self-indulgence for the worth that comes with Jewish self discipline is initially appealing. But what if, in due course, it also entails giving up the right to think and will freely we so intimately associate with human dignity? Is our humanity found essentially in living God's Law as enunciated by our sages and not equally in utilizing mind and heart to determine personally what God wants of one, a member of the Jewish people? And what about the further entailment, that sacrificing our right of conscience implies that others ought to do the same, thus vitiating the grounds for democracy?

The Return of the Repressed Self

From such ruminations, I believe, arises the glimmering intuition that orthodoxies are a dangerous therapy for a self and society sick of freedom. Law and authority promise to contain the waywardness that turned the liberation of autonomy into individual and social excess. With rationality and culture no longer able to provide convincing limits to our self-defeating experimentation, we hope orthodoxies will. Only, it turns out, the creative power of the self cannot long be denied. We see it emerging on two levels in contemporary Orthodoxy, masked as objectivity, to be sure, but identifiable as self-determination and as subjectivity.

Consider for a moment the pluralism inherent in *halacha*, a feature of which we are often reminded these days and one of which all Jews have reason to be proud. Learned non-Orthodox views to the side, how should a Jew respond to the variety of instruction available? Thus, shall we give credence to Eliezer Waldenberg who permits the abortion of a thalidomide affected fetus when almost all other authorities forbid it? Or shall we listen to Yehudah Perilman's lonely voice authorizing postcoital contraception in the case of a raped but nonetheless healthy mother? (Abortion has no support at all.) Hearing a diversity of voices, any caring Jew must then ask how one can tell which voice speaks authentically.

As a result, since one intends to abide by *halacha*, one goes about picking and choosing among *poskim* until one finds one who agrees with one's own conscience. It is the covert Orthodox equivalent of *The Jewish Catalog*. (And not entirely our idea as indicated by the maxim: *a yid gefint sich an etzah*, "a Jew'll find a way out.") Such shopping for rulings makes the self, not God (via the *posek*), the final authority—the very heresy of liberal Judaism.

Subjectivity in the Halachic Process

A similar issue arises in trying to understand why *poskim* read and combine the same texts in such differing ways. Why do some of them come to quite individual conclusions? To be sure, their texts, their times, their community, their halachic peer group, all channel their rulings. So much might be "objective." But why do they see just this in their texts, times, community and peers? And their personal form of piety. Some may say, in faith, Judaism teaches that is how God instructs us. But one might agree that God works through persons and mean that to say that who the sage is will powerfully affect his rulings. Conceal it as one will under layers of institutionalized erudition and piety, the creativity of the self still operates. Law arises first in the independent will responding to God in Covenant—that seems undeniably obvious to the modern eye. To trust the sages, in this view, is not merely to entrust one's self to God but, to a considerable extent, to the person of this or that sage. In many instances that is a fulfillment—and thus the appeal of contemporary Orthodoxy in its several forms of withdrawal from contemporary fashion. But, I contend, the rest of us increasingly realize that "many instances" is too small a promise to warrant a surrender of the self.

If, for all our loyalty to tradition, the exercise of our full intellectual and spiritual individuality so

significantly shapes our religious lives, should we not now openly acknowledge that fact? and should we not then seek to determine what, in extending the chain of tradition, might constitute a proper Jewish self today?

The Realism Behind the Abstraction

Those of us who are liberals have an immediate political reason for wanting to know about the ultimate place of conscience in Orthodoxy. We wonder: are the modernist, quasi-democratic readings of *halacha* only temporary accommodations made by those seeking to make their discipline attractive to the sceptical? or are the restrictive, anti-democratic ones only the exceptional products of zeal for God? In brief, what might we expect if Orthodoxy came to full political power in the State of Israel or had equivalent sway in American Jewish life?

I see some such aggregate of understanding slowly arising among many who have hoped to remedy the failures of liberalism by social conservatism and a turn to Orthodoxy. And in this shift toward what we might yet freely create out of devotion to the Covenant if not the *halacha*, I also see our community's greatest hope. □

...but others say about amalek...

Affirming the Torah's Ethical Thrust

According to our Torah, pragmatism is not in itself a sufficient motivator for Jewish behavior. Nor do we determine our responses by seeing what our adversaries permit themselves and retaliating in kind. Jews ask, "What does God want of us in this situation, and how can we sanctify His name?" That is why we include in our *chumash* the book of Deuteronomy which sets forth for us ethical expectations far more stringent than those of other nations.

Some of the commonest practices of warfare are forbidden us: destroying trees used for food and gang-raping the enemy's women on the battlefield. We are enjoined to behave ethically even to those considered society's dregs: We must not return fugitive slaves to their masters or execute the families of capital criminals or let their bodies rot unburied. The Jewish people has assented to Deuteronomic law and the values which flow from it as a behavioral standard.

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The Torah also reminds us that, though war may be necessary, it is not military might or strategy which will save us but rather "the Lord your God who brought you from the land of Egypt." Mere survival was never a Jewish value. We are to survive in order to be the people God liberated from Egypt and covenanted with: a people indelibly marked by oppression, violence and alienation; a people mindful of the dangers and moral ambiguities implicit in the exercise of power, who strive therefore to be just.

It is particularly distressing to see Jews, in the name of survival, destroy centuries of Jewish legal and ethical development. The Talmud has not painstakingly built up a code of civil damages, teaching us accountability to those we have injured only for Meir Kahane and his ilk to reduce "an eye for an eye" to a rationale for primitive blood-vengeance. I find similarly irresponsible and dangerous the current attempts to reverse the long-standing tendency in Jewish law to place the commandment unconditionally to obliterate Amalek in a unique category referring only to that specific people. It is noteworthy that the ruthless and brutal Romans, who held far more political power over Jews than Arabs now have, were identified with Edom by the sages, but never with Amalek. We must restrain ourselves from arguing, even rhetorically, even out of fear, even out of desperation, that the characteristics or behavior of any nation or people with whom we are in conflict warrants their total extermination, for that is what the commandment of *mechiat Amalek* means.

Rachel Adler
Minneapolis, Mn.

...but others say...

Nuclear Effects under Jewish Law

With regard to our confronting nuclear war (*Sh'ma*, 15/297), I question that the application of *milchemet mitzvah* (required warfare), even in the form of a second strike or restricted to strategic tactical nuclear weapons, is in harmony with *halacha*. Nuclear arms have created a fundamental new reality not foreseen by the rabbis who codified traditional Jewish law.

Thus, *kidush Hashem* (sanctification of God's name) is a *mitzvah aseh* (positive law) that requires the sacrifice of one's life as an alternative to idolatry, murder or sexual immorality (*gilui arayot*). Should *kidush Hashem* not be applied to the potential annihilation of millions of innocent human beings? Maurice Lamm himself refers to the applica-

tion of a law directed towards an individual (Ex. 22:1-2) to the national level; why not *kidush Hashem*?

Furthermore, it seems to me that counterforce falls under the concept of *muktzah* (the prohibition of *permitted* action because it *might* lead to the transgression of a *mitzvah aseh*).

Simon Friedeman
Fort Meyers, Fl.

When we Link Religion and the State

It may still be of interest to provide a historical footnote to a statement of Rabbi Alexander Shapiro in the May 3, 1985 issue of *Sh'ma*. He states that "we cannot in any way accept the definition of a Jew being determined by a vote of the *Knesset* of Israel in which there is participation, as we all know, of total secularists, Arabs, anti-religious Marxists of various stripes, all sitting and deciding a profound issue of religious importance for our community."

There is, however, precedent for this. In 1927 and 1928, a proposal by the Anglican Church to revise the Anglican Prayer Book was twice rejected by the English Parliament in which a majority were not members of the Church, and many of whom were Catholics, Jews and even non-believers. In both years, the result was that the Anglican clergy and congregations were compelled to worship with prayers that their religious conscience deemed to be heretical.

This is a pretty high price to pay for the privilege of establishment. Whether that price should be paid is an entirely different question.

Leo Pfeffer
Central Valley, N. Y.

STUDIES IN AMERICAN JEWISH LITERATURE, 4. Daniel Walden, Ed. SUNY. \$12.95.

"The World of Chaim Potok" is the theme of this annual and assorted authors apply their critical expertise to aspects of his work or criticism of it. I found little that they said nearly as interesting as a lengthy interview with him and some final observations by him on his novelistic career.

GREETING FIFTEEN YEARS of publication now, we say in gratitude, "This happened because of God. We consider it a marvel. God made this day. We rejoice and celebrate God's doing."

APPROACHES TO JUDAISM IN MEDIEVAL TIMES, II. *David Blumenthal*, Ed. Scholars. \$18.95.

These erudite studies range from Yiddish and history to Moslems and Jewish mysticism through Maimonides' language for knowledge and language, the royal-rabbinic power struggle and much else. Deserving its opening spot is Ephraim Karnafofel's intriguing study of Jewish attitudes toward childhood, which is lavishly annotated if somewhat too respectful of his sources.

CONTEMPORARY JEWRY. *Geoffrey Wigoder*, Ed. Institute of Contemporary Jewry, Hebrew University.

This *festschrift* for Moshe Davis on the occasion of his retirement from the Institute which he founded contains 25 papers illustrating the diversity of his interests. Note how Yehuda Bauer's analysis of the problems of taped partisan testimony demonstrates Emil Fackenheim's call for objectivity as well as commitment and objectivity in Jewish study.

AMERICAN JEWISH YEARBOOK, 1985. *Himmelfarb and Singer*, Eds. JPS. \$25.95

The up-to-date lists always make his annual worth having—*Sh'ma* and its phone # are on p. 397—but the scholarly studies of aspects of world Jewry and accounts of the past year add to its authority. And here you can snoop on a synopsis of studies of Jewish community incomes, affiliations and much else that otherwise passes for gossip.

YEMENITE JEWS. *Zion Mansour Ozeri*. Schocken \$19.95.

This delightful photographic essay has an introduction by the Yemenite-Israeli author/photographer which is as graceful as the pictures which form the bulk of the book. They are illuminating and loving without the sentimentality which detracts from much that seeks to pass as Jewish art and thus, in their quiet acceptance of a way of life that is passing, they affect us deeply.

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