

# The SCRIBE

## JOURNAL OF BABYLONIAN JEWRY

PUBLISHED BY THE EXILARCH'S FOUNDATION

No. 30

JANUARY 1989

Est. 1971

WISHING ALL OUR READERS A HAPPY HANUCAH AND A PROSPEROUS 1989

### Election Results

The new administrations elected in both Israel and America augur well for the annexation of Judea and Samaria.

We hope and pray that the government and people of Israel will take the necessary bold decisions to ensure the security and the future of the Jewish State, and apply land taxation throughout Israel.

Let us answer the *intifadha* with an uprising of our own●

*We sadly record the passing of Mrs. Victoria Nissim, widow of the late Sephardi Chief Rabbi of Israel Yitzhaq Nissim, mother of Finance Minister Moshe Nissim and Prof. Meir Benayahu and sister of the well-known author and historian Mr. Abraham Ben-Jacob. Of distinguished rabbinical Babylonian origins, members of the family emigrated to Jerusalem early this century. Sincere condolences to all the family●*

### Kurdish Genocide

Soon after the ceasefire with Iran had taken effect Saddam turned his attention to smashing the resistance of the Kurdish people in northern Iraq. Seeing that the world community has remained silent over his use of chemical weapons against Iran, Saddam used poison gas to attack Kurdish villages, with devastating effect.

A Kurdish leader protested: "This is worse than Hitler. Where is the United Nations, where is the Red Cross?"

The United Nations are a bunch of hooligans, with double standards. The International Red Cross are a bunch of criminals, who knew of the Holocaust taking place, but decided to keep silent. The Swiss bankers during the War were a bunch of thieves, who saw to it that Jewish refugees were turned back, to certain death, so that they could steal their bank deposits.

The events in Kurdistan provide one more evidence of the continuous process of Arabising the Middle East that has been going on for centuries. Yesterday it was Lebanese Christians, today it is the Kurds, tomorrow it can be Israeli Jews - **peace or no peace**. So why should Israel keep silent? The minority nations of the Middle East must hang together - otherwise they will hang separately! Israel should promote a military alliance with the 10 million Kurds to stem Arab expansionist policies in the region.

When you hear the bell of genocide toll, don't ask "For Whom The Bell Tolls?" It tolls for thee!●

Recently unearthed evidence shows that the Red Cross knew of the mass extermination of Europe's Jews but cowardly agreed to keep silent, supposedly in order to have access to allied prisoners of war. This was in collusion with the Swiss government on the pretext that it did not want to provoke a German invasion.

It is odd that in spite of its criminal record the International Red Cross still refuses to recognise the Red Star of David of Israel●



*The end of an era. Naim Dangoor presenting H.E. Mr. Yehuda Avner with a silver dish on the occasion of his return to Israel after completing his duty as Ambassador to the Court of St. James's. In those five years Mr. Avner dominated the Anglo-Jewish scene. Best wishes to Yehuda and Mimi Avner from Babylonian Jewry.*

### Commemorative Israeli Citizenship

The following fax was received from the Office of Legal Adviser, Israeli Finance Ministry:

Dear Mr. Dangoor,

The question raised in your fax was whether the bestowal of commemorative citizenship applies to Jewish martyrs from Arab lands as well as martyrs of the Holocaust.

Section 2(4) of the Law empowers Yad Va-Shem "to confer upon the members of the Jewish people who perished in the days of the [Nazi] disaster and the resistance, the commemorative citizenship of the State of Israel, as a token of their having been gathered to their people."

The martyrdom must be linked to the "Nazi enemy and his collaborators". Consequently, Jews from Arab lands who were murdered by Nazis or their collaborators during the Holocaust would be eligible for commemorative citizenship under the statute. Unfortunately, the Jews murdered in Iraq in 1969 do not fall within the framework or context of this statute.

(Signed) Avraham Krim. Adv.

It is a pity that the statute does not apply to martyrs of Arab regimes - Jews who were victimised solely because of Israel. They too should be "gathered to their people". The Law should be amended in time for the 20th anniversary on 27.1.89 of the hangings that shook the world.

However, the statute seems to apply

to the 180 victims killed in June 1941 at the hands of the followers of the Nazi collaborator Rashid Ali.

These people should be honoured by Israeli citizenships. A list of their names is available●

N.E.D.

### Board of Deputies

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## Operation Babylon

The Story of the Rescue of the Jews of Iraq  
by Shlomo Hillel

Doubleday, 301pp., \$19.95

### BETWEEN IRAQ AND A HARD PLACE

Extracts from a review by Professor Elie Kedourie in *The New Republic*, Washington D.C. Reprinted by permission.

Shlomo Hillel's father had decided to leave Iraq in 1934 in the wake of two events that alarmed him greatly. The first was the indiscriminate Assyrian massacre by the Iraqi army. The second was the unexpected coming to the throne of Ghazi, a young man "with a reputation for being corrupt, hotheaded, irresponsible, a radical nationalist, and an earnest disciple of the Nazis." These events were indeed alarming, portending as they did the thug-gish and blood-soaked politics that ever since has fallen to the lot of this unhappy country.

Jews had lived in Iraq long before the Arab conquest of Mesopotamia. During the 1930s their position was being threatened and gradually eroded by the joint effects of the conflict in Palestine and the officially inspired pan-Arab nationalism, with its fervent admiration of Hitler and the Nazis.

The danger culminated in two days of looting and massacre on June 1-2 1941, following the collapse of a pro-German regime that had, two months before, seized power by a military coup d'état. British troops sent from Palestine had chased out the leaders of the coup and forced the Iraqi army to capitulate. But on the order of the British ambassador, Sir Kinahan Cornwallis, these troops, now in the suburbs of the capital, were forbidden from entering the centre of Baghdad, and from intervening to protect the lives and the property of defenseless civilians.

These events administered a profound shock to the Jews of Baghdad, and to their sense of security. At this point, the Jewish Agency was able to establish contacts and sympathies within the community, largely because Palestinian Jews, employed by the British Army in Iraq, could now enter and leave the country in relative freedom. On his dispatch to Baghdad in 1946, Hillel helped, along with a few others, to direct the emigration network that had been created during the war. Hillel saw it as his mission to raise a new generation of "dedicated activists".

Though the operations of the forces that the Iraqi government sent to Palestine ended in a fiasco, it was able to vent the full force of its fury on the Iraqi Jews, who came to be treated not as citizens but as hostages. Free rein was given to this hostility in the martial law courts that were then established, and that became distinguished for their ferocity and arbitrariness.

In February 1950 a change of government brought to power Tawfiq al-Suwaydi.

Suwaydi allowed those Jews who indicated within one year their desire to leave Iraq to do so. They would have to give up Iraqi citizenship. The preamble of the law declared that it was undesirable to keep in the country Jews who wished to leave and who were now doing so illegally. The Iraqi government and the Jewish communal authorities did not expect more than about 10,000 Jews to leave the country. But during the year in which Suwaydi's law had currency, the emigration movement gathered momentum. By the end of the year, all of Iraq's Jews, except for an insignificant minority, had opted to leave their country for Israel.

How did this come about? The sequence of events is by no means clear. We may dismiss Hillel's assertion that the Iraqi Jews were "Zionist almost by nature". These Jews were highly unpolitical. They certainly entertained no visions of political and national salvation to be achieved through Zionism in Palestine or Israel. They may have been panicked by bombs thrown at Jewish businesses or places of resort. It is still not clear who was responsible for the bombings. But much more important was the ferocious and lawless onslaught on their sense of security carried out by the Iraqi police and martial law courts.

Suwaydi's law came at the end of a period of relentless persecution, and seemed to offer relief. Hillel attributes the change of policy to the activities of the Zionist underground in organizing emigration via Iran during 1949 - an activity in which he was prominent. Certainly, after the change of policy, the underground Zionist organization came into its own. The underground was able, somehow or another, in spite of the insignificant numbers involved and their lack of standing in the community, to become the hidden, anonymous, and effective government of the Iraqi Jews.

The organization of the airlift by the Israeli authorities, and by Hillel, who went back to Baghdad under yet another false identity, is the most important affair recounted in this book. According to Hillel, he obtained the consent of the Iraqi government for the transport of the Iraqi Jews by an American company with the help of an Iraqi tour operator in whose company the prime minister was a shareholder, and which stood to make a good profit from the transaction.

In Israel in 1950-51 there were no facilities for receiving large numbers of almost destitute emigrants - destitute because the Iraqi government very severely regulated the luggage, valuables, and currency that the Jews could take out, and because at the end of the year's registration period, when the overwhelming majority had become stateless persons, a law was suddenly passed that their possessions were forfeit to the Iraqi government. From Hillel we learn that Levi Eshkol told him that Israel had no ability to absorb these emigrants. David Ben-Gurion on the other hand told Hillel to go and "bring them quickly". It may be that, as Hillel argues, it all turned out for the best. But, in the end, who can really know? What is certain is that large num-

bers of people had decisions vitally affecting their own lives surreptitiously taken out of their hands.

**"Studies in Modern Arabic Prose and Poetry", by Prof. Shmuel Moreh (E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1988) 179pp. With a preface by Dr. Davide Sala.**

European orientalists have been interested in Arabic literature since the 18th century when the French Antoine Galland translated "The Arabian Nights" (12 volumes 1704-1717) and the English George Sale translated the Koran (1734). Professor Reynold A. Nicholson published an admirable "Literary History of the Arabs" (1907). However all these eminent Arabists were concerned with early and Medieval Arabic literature, and for them their studies ended with the downfall of the Abbassid Empire in the 13th century C.E.

It was probably Carl Brockelmann, with his masterly survey of Arabic literature published in Weimar (1898-1902) and subsequently re-edited and brought up-to-date, who was the first to scan modern Arabic literature and to bring its authors and poets in Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and other countries to the attention of the Western world. His authoritative work has been translated into Arabic and other languages.

Shmuel Moreh, born in Baghdad and holding now a professorship in the Department of Asian and African Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, has contributed several studies in Arabic and English on modern Arabic literature.

His latest book under review is a collection of essays originally published in literary reviews, e.g. *Middle Eastern Studies*, London, *Asian African Studies*, etc. His subjects include *Poetry in Prose*, *The Neo-Classical Qasida*, *An Outline of the Development of Modern Arabic Literature*, *The Arabic Novel* and *Arabic Literature in Israel*, etc.

Prof. Moreh in his latest book seems to be more interested in the "form" rather than the concepts and purport of modern Arabic prose and poetry. While modern Arab authors created and adapted many new shapes, moulds and styles, they at the same time expressed an endless variety of ideas, images and themes. All literary schools flourished since the beginning of the present century: classicism, romanticism, mysticism, realism, naturalism, rationalism, symbolism, existentialism, dadaism, even absurdism. Many Arabic poems, novels, short stories and dramas have been translated into English, French, German and Russian. Modern Arabic Literature has finally secured its place as a cultural force in the contemporary world.

Meer S. Basri

### The Paper Millionaire

by Roger Shashoua

232 pages - £12.95

The BOOK - published by Duckworth.

Soon - the SONG will be released, the GAME will be launched (how to avoid the crash of 1992), the PLAY will open.

SCAPEGOAT - by Eli Amir, published by George Weidenfeld.

It is a novel that deals with a group of Iraqi-born children who are educated in a kibbutz and whose parents live in transit camps. It highlights the cultural conflict between East and West in the 1950s in Israel.

# The Brothers

The Rise and Rise of Saatchi & Saatchi  
by Ivan Fallon, 1988, £12.95, 368pp.  
Century Hutchinson, London

It is the story of Baghdad-born Charles and Maurice who have become world masters of publicity. The book highlights a photograph taken from *The Scribe*.

(I am especially grateful to Naim Dangoor for his invaluable help and guidance on the history of Iraqi Jews – the Author).

## Condensed from Chapter One

Considering they are household names in business circles around the world, Charles and Maurice Saatchi are probably surrounded by more myths and misconceptions than any other businessmen. They were the two boys who had changed Margaret Thatcher's voice and hairstyle, who by advertising and promotion had put her in Downing Street – and continued to guide her every move. Yet who really were they? Where did they come from?

Charles and Maurice, sons of Nathan and Daisy Saatchi, were born in Baghdad into a large family household, containing literally dozens of aunts, grandparents, cousins and servants. Nathan was a prosperous textile merchant, and shared a huge house with his brother, who was also his business partner. It was not untypical of other Iraqi Jewish families at the time, an extended and close family living in some prosperity and even luxury.

Between the births of Charles and Maurice the political climate in Iraq changed dramatically. In mid-war when Charles was born it was relatively peaceful, although only two years before, on 18 April 1941, Rashid Ali al-Gaylani, a man known for his Arab nationalist sympathies and pro-German sentiments, had formed a new government, which included elements notorious for their Nazi connections and their anti-Jewish inclinations. A month later, with Rommel's troops advancing towards Egypt, Rashid Ali declared war on Britain: so began the harassment of a community which had prospered and multiplied around Baghdad from Babylonian times. Rashid Ali's government did not last long – it fled at the end of May, when British troops approached the outskirts of Baghdad. But in the aftermath, and with British troops still waiting to enter, demobilised Iraqi soldiers turned on the Jewish community, killing 180 and wounding many others.

When Tobruk fell to the Germans the news was greeted with open jubilation in nationalist circles in Baghdad. The overthrow of Rashid Ali and the battle of Alamein at the end of 1942 caused the nationalist feeling to abate again, and by 1943 there was little overt sign of the trauma that lay only a few years away. The latter years of the Second World War were actually a time of considerable growth in the Iraqi economy.

The Saatchi family was not one of the very wealthy who built their castles and fine houses along the banks of the Tigris river which flows through the heart of the city, but well-to-do none the less.

Nathan Saatchi is a short, slight man, who, like most middle-class Jews of Iraq, is well educated. Many educated Baghdad Jews speak up to five languages, including English and French, but the main spoken one is Iraqi Arabic, with English taught as the second language. Nathan, like all his contemporaries, went through the age-old ritual of using a matchmaker when it came to finding a wife: the story is related of how he was told to walk past the window of a certain house at a certain time and there would be a pretty girl standing there. Daisy Ezer had been to the Alliance School for Girls, and came from a similar middle-class background. She was seventeen when they married in 1936, Nathan being twelve years older.

Nathan and Daisy had grown up in a Jewish community which witnessed few of the pogroms or anti-semitism which their Ashkenazi brethren lived through in eastern Europe at the time. When in 1917 the British entered Baghdad, the Jews constituted the largest single group in the population – 80,000 out of 202,000. To their horror, the British, after the First World War, proposed setting up indigenous governments in Syria and Mesopotamia, as Iraq was then called. In 1921 the Jews asked for British citizenship but were refused, and they watched uneasily as Amir Faisal was brought from Mecca to take over the Kingdom of Iraq.

From the mid-1930's, coinciding with the rise of Nazism in Europe, the position began to change, but there was still little sign that 2500 years of history were drawing to a close.

Few Jews of the generation of Charles and Maurice Saatchi have anything more than a superficial knowledge of the culture they left behind, yet the generation of Nathan and Daisy was steeped in it. Hebrew associations with Iraq go back to the time when Abraham, the very first Hebrew, set out from Southern Iraq to Canaan to form a new nation which he was convinced was destined to bring the knowledge of God to the world. Twelve centuries later, in 597BC, King Yehoyachin and many of the leading citizens of Judah were brought captive to Babylon. Then eleven years later, in 586 BC, came one of the major events of Jewish history. The Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar, razed Jerusalem to the ground and took the entire aristocracy of the Jews into exile in Babylon. They were the craftsmen, physicians and priests – practically all the skilled and educated people in the population. From this deportation most historians date the fashioning of the real Jewish religion. 'Out of the crucible of exile and affliction, Judah emerged, purged and purified, into a new people – the Jews', wrote Rabbi Isidore Epstein. 'Spreading quickly throughout the earth, the Jews carried wherever they settled a new message – Judaism.'

Far from being treated harshly, the Jews of Babylon were given fruit trees and vineyards, land and houses. According to the Jewish historian Naim Dangoor they 'gradually took the position of colonists rather than of captives'. When the Persian king Cyrus the Great defeated Babylon and tried to repatriate the Jews, only 40,000 returned. Another 80,000, encouraged by the Persians, stayed and prospered in the rich land by the waters of Babylon, though still, according to the psalm, weeping when they remembered Zion.

Dangoor, whose grandfather was the chief rabbi of Baghdad, points out that the Jews of Baghdad number among their ancestry such figures as the Prophet Ezekiel, Joshua the High Priest, Ezra the Scribe, Nehemiah the Prophet and the great Rabbi Hillel, a gentle philosopher and teacher whose most famous and lasting saying was: 'If I am not for myself, who will be for me? And if I am only for myself, what am I? And if not now, when?' It is a line curiously evocative of the Saatchi philosophy.

At one time Babylonian Jewry totalled a million, and may have constituted the largest part of the population. It produced one of the great jewels of Jewish history: the Babylonian Talmud, written between the second and fifth centuries BC. Babylonia also gave the Jews something else – their love of commerce. In Israel the Jews had been an essentially agricultural race: peasants, settlers, cattle-breeders and tradesmen. To survive and retain their culture they had to change. It was in Babylonia that the occupations of merchant, trader, financier and banker were introduced to Jewry – professions which continue to be favourites with Jews up to our own day.

Despite this background, when Charles Saatchi was four and his brother Maurice only a baby, Nathan and Daisy decided to abandon

their life in Iraq and leave with whatever they could. They were the forerunners of what, proportionately, was a huge exodus. Within a few years they were followed by some 120,000 Jews, leaving only 15,000 behind. After mass executions of Jews in 1969 the others followed, leaving just a few hundred elderly Jews in Baghdad today. As the Jerusalem Post declared in 1986: 'No other exodus in Jewish history, except the exodus from Egypt, was comparable in terms of its drama and spontaneity to the story of the Iraqi Jews.'

In 1946 the Iraq economy was in one of its worst ever recessions, partly the result of the huge inflation of the war years, and the Saatchi family business suffered badly. Nathan was no longer leaving very much behind: In 1947 he and his brothers sold the business, and he, Daisy and their children set off for England.

Nathan anticipated disaster by a couple of years. With Maurice in Daisy's arms, the family caught a train to Lebanon, then a boat to Marseille, and another boat to England. The trip took three months. Daisy had been far more reluctant than Nathan to leave, but for a wife of her generation there was no question of not going with her husband.

After their arrival they first lived in a house in Hampstead. For a few years it was a lonely existence. On Nathan's orders only English was spoken at home.

The richer Iraqi Jews of the day went mostly either to the United States or to Britain. The poorer ones on the whole went to Israel.

Like most Jewish families, the Saatchis observed their religion, and for years afterwards colleagues of Charles and Maurice can remember them leaving business meetings to be at their parents' home on a Friday night.

The Saatchis also found that in post-war Britain Jews were thriving in all areas of life, from business to politics to the arts. Some Iraqi Jews were already well established in public life, others were soon to become so. The Sassoons had produced Siegfried, the unlikely war hero and poet, as well as bankers and stockbrokers. Robert Sheldon became a minister in the Wilson Labour government and is now a leading Labour backbench MP; Derek Ezra, now Lord Ezra, became chairman of the National Coal Board and later a leading member of the Social Democratic Party in 1984. Selim Zilkha founded Mothercare. Others like Alan Yentob, one of the senior executives at the BBC, or the financial writer Stella Shamoon, achieved success in the media.

Charles, although clearly bright, was not an academic success and was no more distinguished in maths. His teacher remembers him as 'the boy who was always struggling, always getting detention for bad conduct. He took no interest in school activities, clubs or sport. He was the sort of boy who made you wonder what would ever become of him.' A school photograph taken in 1956 shows Charles as a well-built thirteen-year-old, his face round and serious beneath a mass of black curly hair, already one of the tallest boys in the school.

Both teachers and fellow pupils remember his driving energy and impatience, a kind of pent-up force which set him aside from the others and which was clearly going to be channelled into something.

## Jordan's Name

In a previous issue we published a letter from Prof. Rony Gabbay which contended that when King Abdullah of Jordan wanted to include the name of Palestine in the title of his kingdom he was dissuaded from doing so by Israeli leaders.

In fact, according to British cabinet papers released by the Public Records Office, the Foreign Office under Ernest Bevin prevailed upon King Abdullah to drop his plan.

P.S.G.

## Do we have free will or are our actions pre-determined?

by Naim Dangoor

God has given us a measure of Free Will and He doesn't want to know how we use it

When I was 12 years old my late grandfather used to ask me difficult questions. One such was whether I thought man had free will or his actions were pre-destined. Having reached the ripe old age of 80 and spent all his life in rabbinical studies, he apparently could not come to a decisive answer. Of course, neither could I; but I have been thinking over this puzzle ever since.

It is impossible to solve this problem by experiment. If you decide to take a certain action and then change your mind several times, what you end up doing may have been pre-destined all along.

### The Biblical View

Very early on Genesis deals with this question. Against God's command, man eats of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. This act imposed on us moral responsibility by which, according to the Jewish religion, we are held accountable for our actions. Christian theology, in its turn, has fashioned out of this story the doctrine of original sin, which teaches the inherent depravity of the human race as a result of Adam's "fall". Christ comes as the redeemer of mankind from this sin.

After having eaten of the tree, Adam became a moral being. If so, why did God object? Was man destined to remain amoral?

The question of Good and Evil touches the very roots of religion. Zoroastrianism resolutely tackles this by posing two primeval forces Ahura-Mazda and Ahriman – light and darkness, locked in mortal combat. The post-Exilic utterance of Deutero-Isaiah (45:7) thoroughly rejects this solution. "I form the light and create darkness; I make peace and create evil; I am the Lord that doeth all these things." Only in a monotheistic religion does the problem of the origin and continued existence of evil become acute. The God who tolerates evil can never be acquitted of complicity: either He is not omnipotent or else is not perfectly good.

### In the Image of God

It is amazing how science has continued to vindicate Jewish beliefs. First there is the creation of the Universe which science now accepts as the Big Bang. But at one time the Jews were the only people who believed in it. The

tradition goes back to Adam – a great prophet, founder of monotheism, discoverer of wild wheat and, by definition, father of civilization. In contrast, the philosophy of other nations was very shallow.

In the course of his conquest of most of the known world, Alexander the Great visited Judea in 333 BCE and became acquainted with Judaism. He wrote to his tutor Aristotle, disciple of Plato and Socrates, asking what he thought of the Jewish story of Creation. "What creation?", replied Aristotle, "The world has always been there." Aristotle taught the eternity of matter and his theory was resisted by the rabbis. Indeed, science continued to doubt the Jewish version until modern times. It was of this situation that the prophet had declared earlier:

"Arise and shine, for thy light is come,  
and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.  
For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth,  
and gross darkness the nations:  
But the Lord shall arise upon thee,  
and His glory shall be seen upon thee.  
And the Gentiles shall come to thy light,  
and Kings to the brightness of thy rising."

The blindness of scientists and philosophers is not surprising, for science teaches only the laws of observation, whereas religion, by divinely inspired faith, penetrates the unknown.

A corollary of the Biblical story of Creation is that at the Beginning, God did not just create space and matter but that He also created Time. In his 2-volume commentary on the *Chumash* (Pentateuch) which he started writing some 75 years ago and which I published last year, I was intrigued to note that my late grandfather Haham Ezra Dangoor makes reference to this creation of time from a timeless state – a situation very hard to imagine, and confirms that for God time is meaningless – an amazing shot in the dark, which conforms perfectly with Einstein's 4-dimensional theory of relativity.

This theory itself has its origins in rabbinical dialectics. The Babylonian Talmud discusses whether a person who is walking for hours on a platform that is moving in the opposite direction, would be breaking the Sabbath if his position *relative* to the earth remains the same. Einstein admits that this gave him the idea for his theory of relativity.

Genesis further declares that God created mankind in His own image. It

is not just the appearance: God gave us a spark of holiness, love, justice, genius, truth, mercy – God's attributes are all reflected in us. He gave us a spark of creativeness so that all His creatures can adapt their minds and bodies to their needs.

God also gave us a measure of free will. Man is said to have the freedom to choose between good and evil and that God knows everything in our minds. To me this seems incompatible. If God knows everything in our minds, everything we are going to do, then that means we have no choice; and unless we have freedom of choice, we cannot be held responsible for our actions.

I believe that we do have some free will and to that extent God doesn't know and doesn't want to know what we are going to do, otherwise we would be just robots. Just as God gave us a measure of His various attributes it can be said that He also gave us a measure of HIS free will. Every system of education whether at home or at school must have as its ultimate aim to make people independent and self-reliant. How much more so should be the universal plan of God, our Supreme Educator?

Isaac Luria (father of Kabbala) speaks of Tzimsum (withdrawal) that, at the first act of Creation, God (En Sof) withdrew Himself into Himself in order to leave a space that was without God; Luria is here referring to Space. I don't think there is anywhere without God. The whole cosmic order ever depends on His will. But God withdrew in another sense: He gave all His creation a measure of HIS free will. The species that survives is one that can make the right decisions as it passes through the maze of the future. The species that became extinct were those that came to a dead end in that maze. The species that will continue to make the right decisions will eventually become gods in their own right.

Some consider evil to be the result of this Divine self-limitation whereby God grants to His creatures a measure of freedom to choose between what is advantageous or harmful to them. God is thus exonerated of complicity in evil consequences. This is best illustrated by the Koranic statement: "All the good that comes to you is from Allah, and all the bad from your own self."

### The Nature of Free Will

It must be clear that any freedom of choice we may have can only be exercised within the laws of the universe which include certain moral laws. We break any of these laws at our peril. Our freedom is further restricted and fashioned by our past, our origins, our surroundings, etc. What we are left with is not so much a freedom as the *problem* of having to choose all the time between several options open to us. Jean-Paul Sartre speaks of the individual "condemned to be free".

As against the Islamic ideal of surrendering to the will of God, Jewish tradition is for arguing and disputing with God. The very name Israel means: he who fights with God.

### Traditional Views

The rabbinical Jewish view is that "everything is in the power of Heaven, except the fear of Heaven", which means that God determines the fortune of the individual but not whether he will be God-fearing or not. This is another way of saying that we have free will. But does God intervene in history and in human affairs? We have no direct experience that He does and the Holocaust is often presented as evidence that He doesn't.

I believe that the Universe is based on a set of Laws; and just as there are laws of physics, chemistry and biology, the world is subject to moral laws based on justice, truth and mercy. In the long run good always prevails over evil. Let it be said that God can also perform miracles if He so wishes.

The fatalism of eastern cultures arises not so much from a belief that the future is pre-determined as from the knowledge that you cannot change events once they have taken place. Thus they take the philosophical view that what has happened was destined, was *written*.

The Moving Finger writes; and having writ,  
Moves on: nor all thy Piety nor Wit  
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,  
Nor all thy Tears wash out a Word of it.

### The View of Science

The modern scientific view of Creation and related matters is based on Einstein's four-dimensional theory of relativity in which time is just another dimension, so that space and time are integrally bound up in a unified existence.

According to this theory we must regard all time – past, present and future – as being in existence together. In this four-dimensional framework of space-time nothing changes. Everything simply *is*. For God time does not exist. He did not just create the world and left it at that. As Author of Creation the beginning and end are



With His Grace The Archbishop of Canterbury.

"As a philosopher, I don't believe in Free Will".

equally known to Him. (This strangely accords with Jewish *Kabbala* which maintains that at Creation everything was created – all generations to the end of Time, and everything is written in the book of destiny).

With Earth's first Clay they did the Last Man knead,

And then of the Last Harvest sow'd the Seed:  
Yea the first Morning of Creation wrote  
What the Last Dawn of Reckoning shall read.

The scientific theory was discussed by Professor Stannard in an article in *The Times* some months ago. He gives a homely analogy to help visualise the situation. You are reading a book. The story unfolds to you a little at a time. But for the author the story is already written in the book; the *entire* story exists. It does not evolve; it does not change; it simply *is*. (Was there then some truth in Aristotle's thinking?)

The author of the book stands for God. Just as an author does not write the first chapter, and then leave the other chapters to write themselves, so God's creativity has to be seen as permeating equally all space and all time; His role as Creator and Sustainer merge. Stannard goes on to admit that God's relationship to time remains deeply mysterious. It defies common sense.

My interest in the above made me write the following letter to the Professor:

"You state in your article that God created the beginning and the end of the universe simultaneously, and that we are only experiencing as it were a replay of history and the entire history already exists. For God the beginning and end of all things are equally known. Does this mean that every action is pre-determined, or is it conceivable that we may have a measure of free will, however small, to decide our actions and choose between good and bad?"

My letter found Professor Stannard at the Center of Theological Inquiry, Princeton, New Jersey. Apparently not satisfied with all the answers of physics, he wanted to enhance his knowledge by taking a year's course in theology. He replied as follows:

"The question you ask about free will is a very perceptive one. From God's point of view the future is not open – he knows what it contains – he knows how you will choose. But it is still *your* choice. As far as you are concerned the future does not yet exist and when you come to choose you will act in accordance with your character, in the pursuit of your goals, and in accordance with your principles. I am sending you a copy of my second article on just this subject which I have submitted to *The Times*."

His article states that a study of physics seems to deny free will. Everything is subject to set laws. The future is fixed.

"So, accepting the fixity of events, what are we left with? A person whose actions reflect his character, his goals and his principles sounds very much like someone who has free will. What is missing? The openness of the future – the ability to act otherwise. But, by definition, alternative courses of action would never be selected. **For this reason, it can be argued that he is as morally responsible for his actions as one who possessed free will as traditionally understood.**"

To me this sounds like saying a man is responsible for what he looks like, which is absurd. By a stretch of meaning he may be "responsible" in that he suffers the consequences, but certainly he cannot be held *morally* responsible. So I replied as follows:

"*Kismet* has been an age-old belief in oriental cultures – a written book of fate, a fixed destiny. Science now seems to confirm this; and although it is difficult to conceive that our experience of time is just an illusion, I will go along with all you write as plausible, with the exception of the last sentence.

"If man **has** to do what he does, even if this is in accord with his character, then the inference is that **he has no choice**. As such he cannot be held morally responsible for his action.

"I would like to believe that man does have the choice of several options; he selects one and enjoys or suffers the consequences."

### Your Slip is Showing

The view of science may be incomplete and open to qualification and correction. If God *created* the universe, and there was the Big Bang, then surely that event must have taken place at some time in the past, at a

P.T.O.

point in time.

It may be of interest to note that at a recent dinner at Lambeth Palace I asked the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Robert Runcie, whether he thought we had free will. His answer was quite direct. "As a Christian," he said, "I believe in free will; as a philosopher, I don't. It is a dilemma."

Up from Earth's Centre through the Seventh Gate

I rose, and on the Throne of Saturn Sat,  
And many Knots unravelled by the Road;  
But not the Knot of Human Death and Fate.

Myself when young did eagerly frequent  
Philosopher and Saint, and heard great  
Argument

About it and about: but evermore  
Came out by the same Door as I went.●

Omar Khayam

### Whatever is - is Best

I know as my life grows older,  
And mine eyes have clearer sight,  
That under each rank wrong somewhere  
There lies the root of right;  
That each sorrow has its purpose,  
By the sorrowing oft unguessed,  
But as sure as the sun brings morning,  
Whatever is - is best.

I know that each sinful action  
As sure as the night brings shade,  
Is somewhere, sometime punished  
Though the hour be long delayed.  
I know that the soul is aided  
Sometimes by the heart's unrest,  
And to grow means often to suffer -  
But whatever is - is best.

I know there are no errors  
In the Great Eternal Plan,  
And all things work together  
For the final good of Man.  
And I know when my soul speeds onward,  
In its grand eternal quest,  
I shall say as I look earthward  
Whatever is - is best. Ella Wheeler Wilcox

Percy writes:

Einstein once said that science without religion is blind; religion without science is lame. Einstein, who was a great Zionist and a friend of Dr. Chaim Weizmann, was offered by Ben-Gurion the Presidency of Israel after Weizmann's death in 1952. Refusing it he said: "While I know something about physics, I know nothing about human nature."●

## LETTERS

I was interested to read in the October issue of *The Scribe* of the need to promote Jewish Population Policies by the Knesset.

As a regular visitor to B'nei Brak I would respectfully suggest that Israelis take a leaf out of their book - The Torah - and "be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth" . . . Genesis, chapter 1, verse 8. The folk in B'nei Brak seem to know how to promote Jewish Population Policies. Perhaps the Knesset would be wise to enquire of them●

Montreux, Switzerland

Sheila Lyons

I write to tell you how much I enjoy reading *The Scribe*. It gives me a welcome insight into the ways of Babylonian Jewry●

Stammore

Jacky Chernett

I am very grateful for receiving *The Scribe* which draws me and Amouma to read it thoroughly with keen interest. When my son Farouk comes visiting from the Isle of Wight he always shows his interest in reading it.

In recent issues of *The Scribe* and specially the August one, I read about the book published by Shlomo Hillel, *Operation Babylon*. I bought this book in May and read it. The way this gentleman worked and risked his life will never be forgotten by all of us. I was living in Teheran from 1933 till 1949, but unfortunately I did not have the chance to meet him and to help him in any way.

For the last 3/4 years, Amouma and myself go to Israel and spend 4/5 months there from December till April. We stay at the Daniel Hotel & Spa in Herzelia, which belongs to my dear friend Leon Tamman. In the hotel we have all the facilities we need, as though we are at home. Each time we are there we donate something useful. Last April before returning to Brighton we bought a room at the Misgab Ladach Hospital in Jerusalem, to run as a Clinic for small children.

I was very glad that in the recent reshuffle Mr. David Mellor has been kicked from the Foreign Office●

Brighton

Abraham Shamash

### Saudi Jews

I was interested to read in your two recent issues about Saudi Jews. In 1948 I was detained at Ain al-Famr, an isolated desert village an hour's drive from Karbala in the south of Iraq where I joined a group of political deportees. We were free to move in the village but could not go outside.

On Ramadhan nights we went to the house of the chief tribal sheikh for dinner and chat. Once the sheikh took me aside and asked me: "You are a nice fellow. Why don't you embrace Islam?" I answered: "Why should I become a Moslem when the Koran itself says 'We (Allah) preferred the sons of Israel over the whole world?'"

Then the sheikh told me that he and his tribe were originally Jews converted to Islam by coercion, many generations before. He said that if I went a half an hour's walk in the adjoining desert I would find old Jewish ruins with the "Magen David" depicted on them●

Paris

Maurice J Elias  
Doctor in Law

Reaching now the age of retirement as a Journalist, Broadcaster at Kol-Israel in Arabic, and Educator, I would like very much to hear from and correspond with friends from both Iraq and Iran, relatives and previous students. I was known as Monsieur Bekhor - Alliance, Baghdad●

P.O. Box 2148, Jerusalem

Jacob Bekhor

I write to thank you for *The Scribe*, which I find very interesting. I was entertained by the article on Sir Victor Sassoon, whom I knew quite well. I sent copies to Daphne (Hardoon) Thurber, as I knew that she would be pleased to read about her father Saleh Hardoon. The new (Chinese) writers on Shanghai have tended to treat him quite unfairly, particularly since it was legal to traffic in opium at the time that he did. The communists seem to have singled him out and they have turned the old Hardoon property into a kind of modern museum and exhibit hall and I understand that they speak rather badly of him when they conduct their tours●

San Francisco

Georges C. Spunt

My father is from Bombay, and so I am interested in finding out more about my roots. Please put me on your mailing list●

Gateshead

Yitschak Chaim David Cohen

Recently we obtained one of your publications (not quite sure how). However, I have found it extremely interesting. My husband was born in Baghdad and immigrated to Israel in 1951. We have been living in Taiwan now for 16 years and our family is very active in our small Jewish community. We are extremely interested in receiving *The Scribe* and wish to be on your mailing list. Congratulations on a great and worthwhile publication●

Taiwan

Fiona & Eli Chitayat

Congratulations for your endeavours and wishing you every success in bringing to the attention of your readers such remarkable 'pearls' of Iraqi-Jewish heritage●

Ramat Gan, Israel

Meyer Y. Nissan LLB.

In the colloquial Arabic of the Jews of Baghdad two words, 'dubadub' and 'kish-bagha' were commonly used. My wife, who is from Basrah, laughs at me when I use the word 'dubadub'. She insists that I drop this word and use instead the word 'mubarak' which the Basrawis use. She also protests when I use the word 'kish-bagha', asserting that it is an old-fashioned expression that even old women no longer use nowadays. On occasions I purposely use the latter word. Its use reminds me of my childhood era, living happily amongst my parents, brothers and sisters. Would any of *The Scribe* readers explain from where these two words came?●

Ramat Gan, Israel

Abraham Yadid

## The Mujahidun

As we watched the faces of the Afghan freedom fighters, the Mujahidun, on television we could not help noticing that their features, their speech, their manners, had a lot of Hebrew characteristics which in fact is not far-fetched.

The Afghans themselves have a tradition that they descend from the lost Ten Tribes. In ancient times conquered nations were transferred *en masse* to far places for military reasons. Thus the Ten Tribes of Israel were driven to the eastern borders of the Assyrian empire as protection against invasion from China. Just as Babylonian Jews were used to protect the western flank of the Persian empire from Roman invasion. The Afghans still call themselves Bani-Israil. Their claim to Israelitish descent is allowed by most Mohammedan writers.

In 622 (the first Islamic year) their leader Qais led some Afghan tribes to Arabia to embrace Islam. Mohammed greeted him as king, as he claimed descent through 47 generations from King Saul. Qais died in 662 aged 87. All the modern chiefs of Afghanistan claim descent from him.

In 1925 King Amanullah Khan told Sir Elly Kadoorie at a Royal party in Baghdad that he was of the tribe of Benjamin (the tribe of Saul).

There are 7 million Bani-Israil in the eastern region of Afghanistan and 7 million in northern Pakistan, who are known as Pathans. The names of their tribes speak for themselves: Harbani (Reuben), Shinwari (Shimeon), Levani (Levi), Daftani (Naftali), Jaji (Gad), Asburi (Asher), Yusuf Su (Sons of Joseph), Afridi (Ephraim) and so on.

Some Pathans still maintain Jewish customs: circumcision within eight days, a prayer shawl, refraining from cooking meat and milk, refraining from work on the Sabbath, etc●

N.E.D.

Percy writes:

In 1947-48, that historic period 40 years ago at the time of Israel's establishment, the Indian Ambassador in Washington, Mr. Asaf Ali, contended that there were five million Muslims of Jewish origin - the Pathans - who were living for generations in Pakistan's North West Frontier Province●

# The Baghdad Hangings

On the morning of 27th January 1969, Jewish children went to school as usual, but returned within half an hour weeping and crying. They informed their families that the nine Jewish prisoners had been executed, their bodies suspended in Tahrir Square, and that their schools were closed as a sign of mourning. An atmosphere of gloom reigned over the whole community.

On switching on the radio and television they heard joyful announcements calling on all the citizens of Baghdad to go to the Square for sightseeing of the suspended corpses of the 15 "spies". Later on, the television showed the horrible scene, with faces uncovered, among them nine Jews - each baring the label "Jew!". Huge gatherings of the populace surrounded the gallows, joyfully dancing, chanting and picnicking. These 15 innocent Iraqi citizens were mercilessly executed at midnight on the electric gallows, installed near the Jewish section of the prison. The other Jewish prisoners could hear them crying loudly together:

"We are innocent,"  
"We are innocent,"  
"We are innocent."

Then they heard the nine Jews loudly making their last prayer to God, "Shema Yisrael Adonai Eloheinu, Adonai Ehad!" and then they heard the terrifying loud sounds of the electric gallows, each sound signifying that one innocent victim was executed. The whole procedure was carried out hurriedly and without ceremony and, according to one report, even without properly making sure that they were dead.

In the early hours the corpses were transported for suspension in Tahrir Square and at the end of the day of festivity, nine corpses were handed over to the Chief Rabbinate for secret burial.

The nine Jews were:

**Ezra Naji Zilkha**

60 year old merchant in Basrah;

**Charles Raphael Horesh**

45 year old commission agent in Baghdad;

**Fouad Gabbay**

35 year old forwarding agent in Basrah;

**Yeheskel Gourji Namerdi**

32 year old clerk in BOAC Basrah;

**Sabah Haim Dayan**

25 year old university student in Basrah;

**Daoud Ghali**

21 year old student in Basrah;

**Naim Khedouri Helali**

21 year old student in Basrah;

by Gourji C. Bekhor

**Heskel Saleh Heskel**

20 year old student in Basrah;

**Daoud Heskel Barukh Dellal**

20 year old student in Basrah.

The ages given here were those announced in the broadcast. However, the actual ages of the Jewish students were 17-19 years, but as Iraqi law prohibits the execution of persons under the age of 20, it is evident that the military court forced them to declare a higher age and to confirm this in the "confessions" in order that their execution could be carried out.

At the same time, two more Jews were hanged in Basrah. They were:

**Yeheskel Eliahou Dellal**

48 year old merchant;

**Yeheskel Raphael Yacoub**

42 year old banker.

Their corpses were likewise suspended, with faces uncovered, in a Basrah square, to the delight of the populace. Indeed a giant crowd milled around, dancing and singing in like fashion to those at Baghdad.

The government's plan to incriminate innocent people can be shown by the following:

(1) Contrary to justice and basic human rights, the court never allowed its victims to appoint lawyers to defend them, nor were lawyers permitted to take on their defence.

(2) The Jews had been restricted to their residential quarters, and no Jew could have gone to the frontier as alleged.

(3) One of the prisoners, Jack Atrakchi, was forced to lie on the ground and a truck was driven over him which crushed him into paste before the eyes of the other victims. Thus the authorities could obtain any "confession" they desired.

The underlying aims of Al-Bakr's regime in falsely charging innocent Iraqi Jews with conspiracies, espionage, sabotage and assassinations and then hanging them, were twofold. First, for the sake of terrorizing and frightening the public so that no attempt against that regime would be made, and second, for the sake of maliciously humiliating all the Jews all over the world in general, and the Iraqi Jews in particular, by falsely charging them with being criminals, conspirators, spies, traitors and disloyal citizens.

## Thoughts on Prayer

It is mainly through prayer that we communicate with the Almighty. The Jewish liturgy is, in a sense, the spiritual continuation of the Bible because of ample quotations from the Tenach.

In Psalm 65 v.3 it is expressly stated that "prayer is heard by the Almighty, to whom all flesh must come." It is incumbent upon every Jew to pray daily to confirm man's fellowship with the Almighty as it is said in Genesis, "man is created in the image of God", i.e. with his spiritual attributes.

Moshe Rabenu with his great prophetic genius expressed in Psalm 90, described as the prayer of Moses, the man of God, gave utterance to what may be seen as the perfect prayer when he concludes: "May the pleasantness of God be upon us, and may He establish the work of our hands." Thus prayer must go hand in hand with work to achieve realisation.

P.S.G.

## AUTUMN TEARS

by Emil Murad

*When Autumn comes, and leaves begin to fall,  
The trees shiver, and sadly wear a frown.  
Each like a body stripped of soul,  
Each like a king without a crown!*

*I lift my eyes towards the pacing dawn,  
As darkness begins to break apart;  
Like the trees I feel naked and shorn.  
But not unlike 'em, inside me beats a heart,  
And like the dead strolling among the graves,  
Or like feathers in a wild wind  
My thoughts run over the waves of time,  
And all of a sudden I remember  
That winter is close at hand,  
And that the rains of December  
Will soon wash away the memories  
That I reluctantly left on the summer sand.*

*A song is heard, then slowly dies, and again  
Beyond the horizon the tune comes to my ears.  
As dawn plants a foot over the trees  
Come those first light, lively drops of rain  
Along with fresh hopes of peace, love and life,  
They come riding over the balmy breeze!*

*With my short arms I embrace the whole world.  
Naked though, the trees and I feel warm,  
With the fresh, wet smell of earth  
Filling my nostrils, calling me back home!*

The death occurred recently in London of Mr. Anthony Meyer, a grandson of Sir Menashy Meyer of Singapore, and also a great-nephew of Sir Jacob Sassoon of Bombay.

At a Memorial Service in the Ohel David Eastern Jewry Synagogue in London, founded by the late Rabbi Solomon Sassoon, a tribute was paid to Mr. Meyer by Mr. Percy Gourgey who knew him from Bombay where he was born.

In the audience was Rabbi Dr. Jonathan Sachs, Minister of the Marble Arch United Synagogue, where the deceased was a regular worshipper.

## Centre Victory

RUSSELL Road community centre has won its appeal to the Secretary of State for the Environment to keep its premises, but its late night discos have been banned.

The smallest of the three houses are converted to residential use. The Department of the Environment's inspector found people living in adjoining houses had been considerably disturbed by the discos but the other activities of the centre did not create a nuisance.

Our Planning success as seen by the *Kensington & Chelsea Post*.

The Scribe is now available on cassette.

£1 for one-hour tape

## BRIDGE

### Three No Trumps

by bridge builder

It is widely supposed that the best game contract is 4 spades or 4 hearts. That is why the Stayman convention was invented. When Partner opens 1 no trump you bid 2 clubs to ask for a 4-card major. If there is a fit in hearts or spades you end up in that suit.

If there is no fit in a major you go back to no trumps. The danger here is that the defenders can thus tell that declarer is short in the majors; and when dummy's hand is exposed they will know what suit to attack.

That is why I don't play Stayman.

Therefore, as everybody knows, my favourite contract is 3 no trumps. If my partner opens one of a suit and I have about 10 high points with the right shape (such as a long minor) I jump to 3 no trumps, thus giving the opponents as little information as possible. Of course, I take into account any bid the opponents may have made and also the fact that the lead is coming from my left.

My 3 no trumps is a shut out bid, for if I suspect slam possibilities I would bid differently. Of course, I do not always succeed in making the contract, but if I go one down we lose 50, whereas the game is worth 500. So it is a reasonable gamble in this case. Those who stop at 2 NT and make 3 are more to blame than those bidding 3 NT and going one light.

A trump suit should only be designated if you anticipate ruffing possibilities. But if you don't need to ruff, why go for 10 tricks when 9 are enough?

My wife, who is of the old school, often converts my 3 no trumps to 4 hearts or 4 spades. The other day, with 9 hearts between us, the opponents were short in side suits and I watched with horror as they kept cross-ruffing before trumps could be taken out – the contract ending 4 off whereas 3 NT would have been a lay-down.

Three no trumps is a bargain; a weakness take-out of one no trump in 2 of a suit requires 8 tricks; 3 no trumps requires only one more trick. Incidentally, 60 percent of all bridge contracts are played in no trumps.

(An amusing incident happened once at a bridge convention when the late Shalom Birshan, a master bridge player in his own right, was explaining to a stranger the niceties of the Stayman convention. Whereupon the stranger interceded, "Excuse me, Sir, but I happen to be Mr. Stayman himself!")

– Alice Shashoua comments on the 2-club convention: Partner opens 2 clubs (23+),

## COOKERY CORNER

by Alice Shashoua

### Mussaka Paulista

This is a recipe without meat and is good as a party dish.

Peel 3 lbs. aubergines (egg plants) in strips and cut in slices ¼ inch thick. Sprinkle the slices with salt and leave in layers in a sieve or colander for about one hour to sweat. This will remove their bitterness. Take out and dry on a kitchen towel and fry in mazola oil till golden. Leave on absorbent paper to drain.

### The Filling:

7 oz. each of grated cheddar cheese, grated mozzarella cheese, and cream cheese;

2 large eggs, beaten;

Salt and black pepper to taste;

2 level tablespoons chopped parsley.

Mix altogether.

### The Topping:

2 large eggs, slightly beaten

2 cups grated cheddar cheese.

Take a 13 by 9 inch pyrex or oven-proof dish and put alternate layers of aubergine and filling, with a layer of aubergine on top.

Put in a preheated oven 400°F or 200°C for about 20 minutes then take out of the oven, pour the beaten egg over it, and sprinkle with the grated cheddar cheese.

Put back in oven for another 10 minutes – but no more.

### Cookery Tips

– Single cream curdles when warmed; use double cream. Don't boil.

– When the food is too salty add a peeled uncut potato. Remove it before serving.

– Cover the bottom of a badly burnt pan with a thick layer of bicarbonate of soda and a little water and leave to soak overnight. Wash in the morning and the burnt part will lift straight off.

– When preparing a salad dressing salt must always go in first then the vinegar and lastly the oil – because salt does not dissolve in oil.

– To remove fat from soup, place a piece of kitchen paper on top to soak up the fat.

– All vegetables that grow underground should be cooked with the lid on; those that grow above, with the lid off.

you respond 2 diamonds (0-7). Partner rebids 3 no trumps (25-26). If you have 7 points you must respond 4 no trumps and let your partner take it from there.

– Leonie says . . .

Never "peter" from Qx. If your partner leads the ace of a suit (from AK) your play of the queen is a conventional way of indicating either that it is the only card you hold in that suit or that you also hold the jack. On the next round Partner will play a low card to pass the lead to you: you either ruff or win with the jack.

We welcome articles, letters to the Editor, photos, ancient and modern, for publishing in *The Scribe*.

## The Shroud of Turin

As was suspected by many people all along, the shroud of Turin has been officially declared to be a modern forgery. The amazing thing is that some diehard Catholics continue to maintain that it is authentic!

Enlightened Christians will gradually realise that, like the shroud of Turin, their religion is based on strata of fallacies and fantasies accumulated over the centuries – the virgin birth, the crucifixion, the resurrection, the divinity of Jesus and other dogmas, some of which are already being challenged by thinking people, such as the Bishop of Durham. Generations of Jewish martyrs have been paying the price of these fanatic beliefs.

The New Testament relates that when Rabban Gamliel, contemporary of Jesus and teacher of St. Paul, was asked by some Jews how to treat the rising new faith, he answered, "Leave it alone. If it is of God it will survive; if it is not, it will wither by itself." Gamliel was not speaking in terms of hundreds of years but of thousands of years. This process is just beginning and millions are now shedding Christianity – witness the large number of churches that are closing every year.

Christianity is not evil but from time to time it fell into the hands of evil people, who instigated Jewish persecutions and organised pogroms, the Crusades, the Inquisition, and finally the Holocaust, which looms larger with the passage of time, and which was in accordance with the teachings of Martin Luther. While preaching a religion of love the Christian Church has behaved as a terrorist organisation. In reality, Christian anti-semitism is not due to anything we did but solely to the fact that we do not wish to be converted. There can be no peace in the world until there is tolerance among the various religions.

We have a duty to save Christianity from itself for, in fact, the only good thing about Christianity (and Islam) are the parts they borrowed from Judaism. We have to lead the way to ecumenism and in stressing the true fundamental moral values of the three great faiths.

## Joint Diseases

The Haifa Medical Centre (Rothschild) will hold the 11th Annual Symposium on the "Management of Joint Diseases" 4-6 April 1989. The theme will be "New developments in Arthroscopic Surgery of the upper and lower extremities". The topics will cover arthroscopy of the shoulder, elbow, hip, knee and ankle. The guest speakers will include:

|                  |             |
|------------------|-------------|
| Jean Yves Dupont | France      |
| Richard Levitt   | U.S.A.      |
| Ejnar Erikson    | Sweden      |
| Roland Jakob     | Switzerland |

### The Judean Centre

A dinner dance was held at the Raleigh Close Synagogue on Sunday, 27 November, organised by the Babylonian Jews who come from India and the Far East. The purpose of the function was to raise funds for establishing a social centre for the community which numbers several thousands.