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Tamara LaFountain

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ISRAEL in TACOMA

Tamara LaFountain
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Faculty Adviser: Dr. Amos Nascimento

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Personal Narrative

During the summer of 2010, I traveled to Israel as a student with the University of Washington's Israel Discovery Seminar. The three-week program introduced me, in a crash course, to the Jewish Nation. During the three-week seminar, my group visited almost 200 sites in Israel. Everywhere we went, the watch word was *Zionism*. It was Zionism that ultimately birthed the State, by way of the tragic labors of the Holocaust. The philosophical theme of Zionism is woven into the historic tapestry that constitutes Jewish history like a golden thread of expectation. Israel embodies *Hatikva*, the hope, for a Jewish future free from persecution and bright with autonomy.

Zionist philosophy clearly boomed in Europe with the writings and work of Hungarian-born intellectual Theodor Herzl. His picture hangs over Independence Hall in Tel Aviv. He is, for all practical purposes, the father of Zionism and the progenitor of Israel, a state that would come into being more than 40 years after his death. He did not live to see the tragedy of the Holocaust, though he may well have privately foreseen the possibility. It was the Holocaust that ultimately and ironically brought his Zionist dream to fruition.

Another land subsequently offered a safe haven for its Jewish citizens: the United States. The liberal atmosphere in America fostered Reform Judaism. The practice burgeoned in America. In the Puget Sound region, a local community of Reform Judaism thrived throughout 20th Century and continues to thrive into the 21st. And while the community of Reformers in America at first scrutinized Zionism and its hopes for a Jewish nation-state, once Israel came into being and triumphed over Arab enemies during the Six Day War in 1967, Reformers embraced Israel, throwing their significant support

behind the State.

I intend to summarize Jewish history and show how the threads of tragedy, Zionism, Reform Judaism and shared-hope run through global Jewish history and are significantly woven into the fabric of the Jewish community in Tacoma. In addition, I will demonstrate the local community's devotion to the State of Israel and its bedfellow, Zionist philosophy.

No race has maintained over so long a period so emotional an attachment to a particular corner of the earth's surface. But none has shown so strong and persistent an instinct to migrate, such courage and skill in pulling up and replanting its roots. It is a curious fact that, for more than three-quarters of their existence as a race, a majority of Jews have lived outside the land they call their own.

--Paul Johnson in *A History of the Jews*

A Summary of Jewish History

A timeline of Jewish history runs along the wall of the Temple Beth El entrance hallway in Tacoma, Washington. The timeline begins with the year 1967 and the words "Jerusalem United." For the Temple community, this unity represents the culmination of their history, a history that began in the 18th Century BCE, when Abraham, the father of the Jewish people, moved out of modern Iraq to wander in the Land that would become Israel. God offered Abraham, the son of an idol worshipper, a covenant: "if Abraham would leave his home and family, then God would make him a great nation and bless him."¹ Abraham accepted God's offer and entered into the covenant. Abraham left Ur in

¹ "Abraham," *Jewish Virtual Library*, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/biography/abraham.html>, (Accessed February 27, 2011.)

Babylon (in modern-day Iraq) and went to the land of modern-day Israel.² The ‘great nation’ promised by God and established by Abraham was to become the Jewish nation. The covenant between God and Abraham marks the end of the hallway timeline at Temple Beth El.

Abraham left Babylon as God commanded and wandered west, eventually purchasing land in Hebron (in modern-day Israel) as a burial place for his wife Sara. Historian Paul Johnson points out in his work *A History of the Jews* that Abraham’s purchase in Hebron marks “[the Jewish people’s] first recorded acquisition of land.”³ The land, though purchased by Abraham, was a portion of that which was promised to him and his descendants by God. The two most arguably important characteristics of the Hebrew religion originated with Abraham in this time: the covenant with one God and the idea of a promised land.⁴ Both ideas endure throughout Jewish history. The Jewish people consider themselves a chosen people, selected by the one true God who promised them the Land of Israel.

Abraham and his wife Sara bore a son named Isaac. Isaac and his wife Rebecca bore Jacob. Jacob married sisters named Leah and Rachel. Jacob begot twelve sons by the two women and two of their slaves. Jacob begot the twelve tribes of Israel, descended from these twelve sons. Jacob and his sons lived within a tribal system; however, it was in the time of Jacob that the people became aware of a common identity: Israel.⁵ While Jacob’s grandfather Abraham had wandered, he paid tribute to local gods, to El Elyon in

² Ibid.

³ Paul Johnson, (1987) *A History of the Jews*. (New York: Harper & Row, Co.), 4.

⁴ Johnson, 17.

⁵ Johnson, 21.

Jerusalem and to El Olam in Beersheeba, for example; however, his grandson Jacob would introduce the one God, *Isra-el*, in Canaan. The word *el* in Hebrew means *God*.⁶ Abraham's grandson Jacob adopted the name *Isra-el* for his God, the God of his grandfather: Yahweh the God of monotheism.⁷

Jacob's youngest son, his favored Joseph, was the target of his older brothers' envy and wrath. By a twist of fate Joseph, abandoned to death by his brothers, ended up enslaved in Egypt; however, his uncanny ability to interpret dreams impressed the ruler who raised Joseph to a position of power.⁸ When a drought plagued Israel years later, Joseph's brothers traveled to Egypt to procure food. They unwittingly asked for help from the brother they abandoned years earlier. Joseph forgave his brothers and brought them and his father's household to live in Egypt with him.⁹ After Jacob died, Joseph buried him in Hebron where Abraham and Isaac lay with their wives in the Cave of Machpelah. Before his own death, Joseph told his people that they would leave Egypt one day and return to the promised land. He asked that they carry his bones with them.¹⁰

Sometime around 1420 BCE, several years after Joseph's death, the Egyptians enslaved the Israelites. The Israelites would remain in bondage until approximately 1280 BCE: the advent of the Exodus. Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt, carrying Joseph's remains, through the Sinai toward Israel. During the journey, Moses received the Ten

⁶ Dr. Amos Nascimento, e-mail correspondence to author, March 8, 2011.

⁷ Johnson, 22.

⁸ "Jacob," *Jewish Virtual Library*, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/biography/jacob.html>. (Accessed February 27, 2011.)

⁹ Shira Schoenberg, "Joseph," *Jewish Virtual Library*, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/biography/Joseph.html>, (accessed February 27, 2011).

¹⁰ *Ibid*.

Commandments (the Torah) from God: laws to govern the Israelites.¹¹ First among these laws was “I am the Lord thy god, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.”¹² The journey took an incredible 40 years, culminating in Joshua’s capture of a portion of the Promised Land. This period is known as the Mosaic Period in Jewish history and lasted from 1300 BCE until 1200 BCE.¹³

About two hundred years later, David, a shepherd from Bethlehem and a descendant of Jacob, conquered Israel’s internal enemies, rose to power and took Jerusalem as his capital city. King David ruled over a powerful and robust Israel.¹⁴ David’s son, Solomon, built the First Temple in Jerusalem between 970 and 931 BCE. In the following decades, the Kingdom of Israel divided in two: the Northern and Southern Kingdoms. Then, in 586 BCE, the Babylonians conquered the southern kingdom in Israel, called Judah, destroyed the Temple and exiled the Israelites.¹⁵ The Babylonians, however, suffered defeat at the hands of the Persians. The Persians allowed the Jewish people to return to Jerusalem (seventy years after the Babylonian exile); however, they did not allow the Israelites autonomous rule.¹⁶ During this period, in 450 BCE, the Torah

¹¹ From an interview with Rabbi Bruce Kadden, Temple Beth El, Tacoma, Washington. Conducted on April 20, 2011.

¹² “The Ten Commandments,” *Jewish Virtual Library*, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/command.html>, (accessed February 27, 2011).

¹³ “Moses,” *Jewish Virtual Library*, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/biography/moses.html>, (accessed February 27, 2011).

¹⁴ Shira Schoenberg, “David,” *Jewish Virtual Library*, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/biography/David.html>, (accessed February 27, 2011).

¹⁵ Martin Goodman, “Jews and Judaism in the Second Temple Period,” *Oxford Handbooks Online: The Oxford Handbook of Jewish Studies*. www.oxfordhandbooks.com (Oxford University Press, 2011) & an interview with Rabbi Bruce Kadden, April 20, 2011.

¹⁶ Mitchell Bard, “The Persians,” *Jewish Virtual Library*, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/Persians.html> (accessed February 27, 2011).

was written down (just prior to the Rabbinic period).¹⁷ The Torah represents all of written Jewish history, teachings and commandments or laws.¹⁸

Then, in 333 BCE, the Persian Period ended with defeat at the hands of Alexander the Great. Thus began the Hellenistic Period in Israel. During this time, one leader ruled the Mediterranean while another ruled Egypt. Israel was at the center of this Greek power struggle. The struggle destabilized Jerusalem. Yet, the Hellenistic period saw the Torah translated into Greek, transforming Judaism to a 'world religion.'¹⁹

Then in 40 BCE, Israel 'became a province of the Roman Empire,' called Palestine, and would remain so until 313 CE.²⁰ Twice during Roman rule, the Israelites revolted, both times suffering complete defeat.²¹ The first defeat witnessed the destruction of the Second Temple (rebuilt after the Babylonian exile) in Jerusalem and the death of the surviving Jewish rebels who held out in the desert at fortress called Masada, south of Jerusalem, for three years.²² During the second revolt, a half a million Jews were killed by Roman forces in Palestine. A pagan temple was built over the site of the destroyed Second Temple in Jerusalem. Beginning in 136 CE, the Roman ruler in Jerusalem forbade Jews to live in the city.²³ However, by 222 CE, Jews were allowed to visit Jerusalem again. During this period and continuing through about 500 CE, the

¹⁷ "Jewish Philosophy," Dr. Amos Nascimento, power-point presentation for TGH 301 (February 14, 2011).

¹⁸ Interview with Rabbi Bruce Kadden at Temple Beth El in Tacoma, Washington, conducted March 2, 2011.

¹⁹ "Greeks and Jews," *Jewish Virtual Library*, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/Greeks.html> (accessed February 27, 2011).

²⁰ "Roman Rule," *Jewish Virtual Library*, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/Romans.html> (accessed February 27, 2011).

²¹ Ibid.

²² "Masada," *Jewish Virtual Library*, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/masada.html>, (accessed February 27, 2011).

²³ "Rabbinic Jewish Period of Talmud Development," *Jewish Virtual Library*, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/rabbi.html> (accessed February 27, 2011).

Babylonian and Jerusalem Talmud, or oral laws, were written down. The oral laws were legal commentary on the Torah (the Written Law) and explained how the 613 commandments found in the Torah were to be carried out.²⁴

In 330 CE, Jerusalem became a part of the Byzantine (Christian Roman) Empire. Palestine became a Christian country in this time period.²⁵ Crusaders built churches on Christian holy sites throughout the country. Christian rule continued for three-hundred years with a wax-and-wan sort of persecution of the Jewish population, including a call by one Bishop for Jews to be killed or expelled.²⁶

The first Muslim period began in Jerusalem in 638 CE and continued through the onset of the Crusades in 1099 CE. During the first Muslim period, the Dome of the Rock was built over the site of the Second Temple. The Dome of the Rock is the second most holy site in Islam. It marks the spot of the Prophet Muhammad's ascent to the heavens. The Crusaders came to Jerusalem to reclaim Christianity's holy sites. These European Christians captured Jerusalem and slaughtered tens of thousands of Jews.²⁷ They expelled the remainder. Meanwhile, throughout Europe, Jews were persecuted and murdered, and accused of blood libel (an accusation that Jews killed Christians to use the blood in religious rituals).

Crusader rule and abject persecution of Jews would continue through 1187 CE

²⁴ "The Oral Law," *Jewish Virtual Library*,
http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/Oral_Law.html (accessed March 13, 2011).

²⁵ "Byzantine Rule," *Jewish Virtual Library*,
<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/Byzantine.html> (accessed February 27, 2011).

²⁶ "Consolidation and Dominance of Classical Christianity," *Jewish Virtual Library*,
<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/dom.html> (accessed February 27, 2011).

²⁷ "Crusades (Christian Warfare with Islam in Palestine)," *Jewish Virtual Library*,
<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/crusadetime.html>,

when Muslim ruler Saladin took Jerusalem back and tolerantly ruled over the three monotheistic religions in Jerusalem: Islam, Judaism, and Christianity.²⁸ Jerusalem would remain under Muslim rule in one form or another through 1920. Meanwhile however, Jewish peoples already dispersed throughout Europe were exiled, persecuted and murdered with impunity. During this period as well, the Jewish people found themselves blamed for the misfortunes suffered by Christians. For example, when the Black Death reached Europe in 1348 CE, Jews were accused of poisoning Christian wells.²⁹ It is important to note, however, that during the period of the Crusades, under Muslim rule specifically, Jewish scholars and philosophers outside of Israel prospered. Judaism's most important philosopher was born in Spain during this time: Moses Ben Maimon (Maimonides).³⁰

Maimonides' family fled Spain ten years after his birth. Eventually, he made his way to the Holy Land and then to Cairo. His two most influential writings during this period were the *Mishneh Torah* and the philosophical work, *Guide of the Perplexed*. The *Mishneh Torah* "is primarily concerned with a systematic ordering and interpretation of the Torah, and is very fresh and articulate as an expression of Jewish traditional practice..."³¹ The *Guide*, on the other hand, is a philosophical work meant to illuminate the Bible: "Human language is of a necessity inadequate in trying to express the nature of God. Nevertheless, some truths can be established on the basis of reasoning -- that God

²⁸ "The Crusader Period," *Jewish Virtual Library*, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/Crusader.html> (accessed February 27, 2011).

²⁹ "Mamluk Rule," *Jewish Virtual Library*, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/mamluktime.html> (accessed February 27, 2011).

³⁰ "Jewish Philosophy," Dr. Amos Nascimento, power-point presentation for TGH 301 (February 14, 2011).

³¹ Ninian Smart. *World Philosophies*, 2nd edition. (New York: Routledge, 2008), pp. 229-230.

exists, is bodiless, is one and is simple.”³² Works written by Maimonides and other Jewish scholars during this volatile period in Jewish history burgeoned despite restrictions on Jewish life, and became an important sustaining element of Jewish tradition.³³

About two centuries after Maimonides death, during the Christian Reformation in Europe, between 1517 and 1569, and in the following century (through 1670) Jewish ghettos, an extreme form of segregation, were established in several countries. In severe cases, Jewish people were burned alive at the stake. However, during the same period, hope blossomed across the Atlantic where Jews were granted rights as citizens in America for the first time in 1657. Two years earlier, in 1655, Jews were readmitted to England.³⁴

While persecution continued to plague the diasporas communities in areas of Europe and all of Russia, Jewish immigrants to America enjoyed near complete freedom from persecution.³⁵ Johnson wrote of this period in *A History of the Jews*, “For a Jew, everywhere except in the United States, remaining a Jew was a material sacrifice.”³⁶ The next centuries would witness the birth of Zionism in Europe as a reaction to anti-Semitism and European nationalism, the flourish of Reform Judaism in America, the near complete genocide of European Jews, and the subsequent formation of the modern State of Israel and ultimately “Jerusalem United.” It is important to here note that all of

³² Ibid, 229.

³³ Ibid, 238.

³⁴ “Dominance of Ottoman Muslim Empire in Turkey,” *Jewish Virtual Library*, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/ottotime.html> (accessed February 27, 2011).

³⁵ “Jewish Modern and Contemporary Periods,” *Jewish Virtual Library*, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/modtimeline.html> (accessed February 27, 2011).

³⁶ Johnson, 312.

the persecution and oppression suffered by the Jewish people throughout the world gave them another important element of their emerging global identity: “The existence of the Jew is an argument against despair; Jewish survival is warrant for human hope.”³⁷

Zionism

...they have a past, a history, a common, unmixed decent, and an indestructible vigor, an unshakeable faith, and an unexampled history of suffering to show; the peoples have sinned against them more grievously than against any other nation. Is not that enough to make them capable and worthy of possessing a fatherland?

--Leon Pinsker in *Auto Emancipation*, 1882

In mid-19th Century Europe, nationalism developed and, along with these nascent national identities, xenophobia blossomed. Xenophobia was a fear of ‘strangers’ or foreigners. In order to maintain their national identities, the various European nationalities needed an ‘other’ to contrast their national identity. The Jewish population, though granted civil rights in the decades prior to this time, perfectly filled that role. A new period of anti-Semitism began. While Jewish people in Europe and Russia were allowed some civil rights, an oppressive atmosphere of anti-Semitism remained, seriously curtailing those rights and endangering the Jewish population.³⁸

Toward the late middle and end of the century, the Zionist movement was born in reaction to modern European nationalism and anti-Semitism.³⁹ Zionism, as defined by the *Jewish Virtual Library*, was “the national movement for the return of the Jewish

³⁷ Eugene B. Borowitz. “Reform Judaism: A Centenary Perspective” in *Reform Judaism Today*. (New York: Behrman House, 1977), p. xxv.

³⁸ Lecture and discussion during 3-week *Israel Discovery Seminar*, (University of Washington: Dr. Gad Barzilai) June 29-July 19, 2010.

³⁹ Rubinstein, Hillary L., et al, *The Jews in the Modern World: A History Since 1750*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 303.

people to their homeland and the resumption of Jewish sovereignty in the Land of Israel.”

European Jewish intellectuals championed the movement.

One of the first among these new intellectuals was Dr. Leon Pinsker, a Jewish thinker from Russia. Pinsker was the intellectual father of the original Zionist organization, *Hibbat Zion*. The group formed in response to the Russian pogroms of the late 1800s. In 1882, Pinsker wrote the influential pamphlet *Auto Emancipation*. Pinsker claimed that the Jewish people could not assimilate and would suffer persecution until they had the security of their own homeland.⁴⁰ He eloquently wrote of the European Jewry’s perpetual and all encompassing ‘otherness:’

They are everywhere as guests, and are nowhere *at home*... for the living, the Jew is a dead man, for the natives an alien and a vagrant, for property-holders a beggar; for the poor an exploiter and a millionaire; for patriots a man without a country, for all classes a hated rival.⁴¹

Another intellectual giant among Jewish thinkers, Achad Ha-am, wrote a 1902 pamphlet supporting Pinsker’s ideas. The pamphlet, entitled “Pinsker and Political Zionism,’ was an influential tribute to the memory of Dr. Pinsker, published ten years after his death.⁴² Ha-am summarized the early Zionist ideal: “There remains, then, but one means of destroying anti-Semitism. We must become again a real nation, possessed of all these essential attributes of nationality by virtue of which one nation is the equal of

⁴⁰ Rubinstein, Hillary L., et al, *The Jews in the Modern World: A History Since 1750*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), p.306.

⁴¹ Leon Pinsker, *Auto Emancipation*. (England: Federation of Zionist Youth, 1977 photocopy), p. 16 & 23.

⁴² Achad Ha-am, “Pinsker and Political Zionism,” (England: Federation of Zionist Youth, 1977 photocopy), pp. 43-69.

another.”⁴³

Arguably the most influential among these Zionist fathers, however, was one of Pinsker’s and Ha-am’s contemporaries, the Hungarian-born Jewish nationalist, Theodore Herzl.⁴⁴ Herzl encountered anti-Semitism while he studied at the University of Vienna in the 1880s and later while living and working in Paris.⁴⁵ During this period, Herzl’s “private records show a growing concern with the Jewish problem. It [soon] irrupted into a veritable obsession...”⁴⁶ As a Parisian correspondent for a Viennese newspaper, Herzl witnessed the 1894 Dreyfus Affair. A Jewish officer in the French armed forces named Alfred Dreyfus was discriminatorily charged with treason because of the widespread anti-Semitic atmosphere.⁴⁷ The Dreyfus Affair represented a catalyst experience for Herzl. Casting about for a solution to the Jewish plight, Herzl concluded that Zionism represented the only hope.⁴⁸

In 1896, Herzl wrote *Der Judenstaat* (The Jewish State). In this work, Herzl surmised that the current plight of the Jews was a result of the Jewish condition as aliens in gentile lands and of the emancipation in Europe. “In all countries where they live in appreciable numbers, Jews are persecuted to a greater or lesser degree,” Herzl wrote. “The equal rights that the law may call for have almost always been nullified in

⁴³ Ha-am, p. 49.

⁴⁴ “Theodore (Binyamin Ze’ev) Herzl,” *Jewish Virtual Library*, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/biography/Herzl.html> (accessed March 5, 2011).

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ Gideon Shimoni. (1995) *The Zionist Ideology*. (Hanover: University Press of New England [for] Brandeis University), p. 89.

⁴⁷ “Theodore (Binyamin Ze’ev) Herzl,” *Jewish Virtual Library*, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/biography/Herzl.html> (accessed March 5, 2011).

⁴⁸ Shimoni, 89-90.

practice.”⁴⁹ The emancipation, Herzl concluded, exacerbated the plight of the Jews, “since the upward mobility of the Jews had made them into ‘fearful rivals of the [gentile] middle class.’”⁵⁰ It is important to note that the contemporary plight of his people, more than a romanticized view of the Promised Land, drove Herzl to advocate Zionism.⁵¹ And yet, Herzl wrote, “All through the night of their history the Jews have not ceased to dream this royal dream: ‘Next year in Jerusalem!’ is our age-old watchword.”⁵²

In 1902, Herzl wrote *Altneuland* (Old new land). In this work, Herzl projected a Jewish state successful in Palestine 25 years in the future.⁵³ Herzl wrote of Palestine as “a state *for the Jews* rather than a *Jewish state*.”⁵⁴ This distinction would become the locus of Zionist debate in future years. Meanwhile, Herzl’s ideas from *Der Judenstaat* appealed to Jewish peoples in Europe. Herzl successfully petitioned wealthy Jews to invest in his Zionist movement.

In 1897, Herzl preside over the First Zionist Congress in Basle, Switzerland. According to the *Jewish Virtual Library*, “The Congress was the first interterritorial gathering of Jews on a national and secular basis.”⁵⁵ During the convention, delegates adopted the Basle Program, declaring: “Zionism seeks to establish a home for the Jewish people in Palestine secured under public law.”⁵⁶ Herzl later wrote, “Zionism demands a publicly recognized and legally secured homeland in Palestine for the Jewish people.

⁴⁹ Theodore Herzl, *The Jewish State* (New York: Herzl Press, 1970), p. 43.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Shimoni, 92.

⁵² Herzl, 38-39.

⁵³ Shimoni, 93-94.

⁵⁴ Shimoni, 94-95.

⁵⁵ “Theodore (Binyamin Ze’ev) Herzl,” *Jewish Virtual Library*, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/biography/Herzl.html> (accessed March 5, 2011).

⁵⁶ Ibid.

This platform is unchangeable.”⁵⁷

Herzl presided over six Zionist Congresses prior to his death in 1904. Of the congresses convened in Basle, Herzl confidently wrote, “In Basle I founded the Jewish state... maybe in five years, certainly in fifty, everyone will realize it.”⁵⁸ Herzl’s prescience is marked. Fifty years later, after World War II, the State of Israel in Palestine would be realized. Meanwhile, during Herzl’s push for Zionism, a liberal form of Judaism was taking hold across the Atlantic in the United States.

Reform Judaism in America

During the period in Europe detailed above, the Jewish population in North America thrived, eventually championing a liberal form of Judaism. The liberal American atmosphere granted considerable vitality to Reform Judaism.⁵⁹ Moses Mendelssohn, although an Orthodox himself, helped create Reform Judaism during the Enlightenment period in Europe. Mendelssohn espoused the idea that the doctrines of Judaism were born of reason and so were universal and compatible with Enlightenment ideas.⁶⁰ He urged Jews to study beyond the “narrow rabbinical system.” He remained an Orthodox his entire life and yet he sparked the liberal movement in Judaism. During this

⁵⁷ David Mendelsson, “From the First Zionist Congress (1891) to the Twelfth (1921),” *Jewish Virtual Library*, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Zionism/firstcong.html>, (accessed March 11, 2011).

⁵⁸ “Theodore (Binyamin Ze’ev) Herzl,” *Jewish Virtual Library*, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/biography/Herzl.html> (accessed March 5, 2011).

⁵⁹ Ninian Smart. *World Philosophies*, 2nd edition. (New York: Routledge, 2008), p. 331.

⁶⁰ Ames, Roger T. “Jewish Philosophy in the Early 19th Century” in *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 96.

same period, Leopold Zunz, considered the father of modern Jewish Studies, argued that reforms, such as sermons in the vernacular, imitated forgotten traditions.⁶¹

While Reform Judaism began in earnest in Germany during the late 18th and early 19th century, when the studies of theology and philosophy flourished there, it was never fully successful in Europe⁶²; however, as German Jews immigrated to America, they found a fertile home for their reforms. In 1885, many Reform rabbis from America met and adopted the Pittsburgh Platform.⁶³ The Platform read, in part, “We recognize in Judaism a progressive religion, ever striving to be in accord with the postulates of reason...”⁶⁴ This echoes Medelssohn’s Enlightenment stance. This Pittsburgh conference was the first consolidation, definition and acknowledgement of the vitality of America’s Reform Judaism movement. The Pittsburgh Platform asserted Judaism’s compatibility with the modern era. Judaism would adapt. Tradition must be analyzed and updated, not adamantly adhered to.⁶⁵ This ideology meshed well with American ideas of liberal theology.⁶⁶

Reform Judaism worked and continues to work in America because it embraced American ideals such as innovation and critique of theology followed by adaptation. One website, <http://www.reformjudaism.org>, linked to the Temple Beth El (Tacoma) website, succinctly defined Reform Judaism’s basis for success in the United States:

⁶¹ Wigoder, Geoffrey, ed., *The Encyclopedia of Judaism*, (New York: Macmillan, 1989), p. 591.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ “Pittsburgh Platform,” *Jewish Virtual Library*, http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/pittsburgh_program.html (accessed March 11, 2011).

⁶⁴ Wigoder, ed. *The Encyclopedia of Judaism*.

⁶⁵ Interview with Rabbi Bruce Kadden at Temple Beth El in Tacoma, Washington, conducted March 2, 2011.

⁶⁶ Smart, 334.

The great contribution of Reform Judaism is that it has enabled the Jewish people to introduce innovation while preserving tradition, to embrace diversity while asserting commonality, to affirm beliefs without rejecting those who doubt, and to bring faith to sacred texts without sacrificing critical scholarship.

This ability to adapt and change (while preserving basic traditions) meshed well with the Protestant American tradition of breaking off into denominations.⁶⁷ It represented a less modified (or more conservative) breaking off than Protestant denominationalism.

Reform Judaism “affirm[ed] the central tenets of Judaism -- God, Torah, and [the People] Israel -- even as it acknowledg[ed] the diversity of Reform Jewish beliefs and practices.”⁶⁸ Reformists adopted *Tikkun olam* (repairing the world) which “strives to bring peace, freedom, and justice to all peoples.” Reformers believed and continue to believe that their religion must adapt to the needs of the day, rather than cling to tradition, in order to endure.

Two years prior to the 1894 Dreyfus Affair, which would catapult Herzl toward Zionism, in 1892, Tacoma’s Reform Jewish community, was born. During the last half of the 19th century, Jewish people from Poland, Russia, Germany and other European countries as well as from New York and other American cities immigrated to the City of Destiny: Tacoma, on the South Sound along the Pacific Coast.⁶⁹ The first known Jew to have settled in the Sound Region was Adolph Friedman, a Latvian. Shortly thereafter, Issac Pincus from Poland arrived in the area.⁷⁰ The South Sound Jewish community

⁶⁷ TGH 301: Global Interactions, February 23, 2011, Class Minutes.

⁶⁸ “What is Reform Judaism?” <http://www.reformjudaism.org> (accessed February 9, 2011).

⁶⁹ Correspondence from Temple Beth El community members, February 2011.

⁷⁰ Stan Farber, ed. (1992) “Centuries to Celebrate: A first century of Jewish life in Tacoma, beginning in 1892.” Temple Beth El book as found on file in the *Northwest Room*, Tacoma Public Library.

steadily grew and formed its first congregation in the Tacoma area in 1892.⁷¹ The Congregation Beth El was founded in Tacoma on July 11, 1892.⁷² It was the first Reform Temple established in western Washington.⁷³

In addition, throughout America this progressive form of Judaism well supported the Progressive Era movements. Jewish Reform leaders supported social reforms. Rabbi Emil G. Hirsch of Chicago, for example, advocated social reforms and “laid the foundation for some of Chicago’s welfare organizations.”⁷⁴ Also in Chicago during this time, Jane Addams, the representative of feminist pragmatist philosophy, founded the Hull House as a social work institution.⁷⁵ In 1919, New York Rabbi Stephen S. Wise spoke in support of steel laborers.⁷⁶ In Tacoma, Jewish ladies operated a fair to raise funds to purchase Christmas presents for poor children.⁷⁷ Clearly, Reform Judaism complimented American Pragmatist ideas of self determination of charitable contributions.

Through the twentieth century, Reform Judaism would flourish in America, becoming, by the year 2000, the predominant form of Judaism in the United States. Thirty-nine percent of the Jewish population would identify as Reform in 2000, compared with 21 percent Orthodox (Traditional) and 33 percent Conservative (the

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Interview with Rabbi Bruce Kadden at Temple Beth El in Tacoma, Washington, conducted March 2, 2011.

⁷³ “Temple Beth Israel--Tacoma--1942-1892--Golden Jubilee Celebration,” Temple booklet as found in the Tacoma Public Library’s *Northwest Room* special collections clipping file entitled “Tacoma Churches: Jewish.”

⁷⁴ W. Gunther Plaut. *The Growth of Reform Judaism: American and European Sources until 1948*. (New York: World Union for Progressive Judaism, 1965), p. 117.

⁷⁵ TGH 301: Global Interactions, February 23, 2011, Class Minutes.

⁷⁶ Plaut, 119-120.

⁷⁷ “The Fair of the Fair,” booklet dated December 1892, as found in the Tacoma Public Library’s *Northwest Room*.

middle ground between orthodoxy and reform).

The advent of a flourishing Reform Judaism in America as well as the establishment of Jewish communities throughout the world perfectly illustrate Thorsten Botz-Borstein's definition of a fluid ethnoscape, "formed to a large extent by immigrants, refugees, and exiles; they are not limited to national boundaries but scattered across the globe."⁷⁸

However, at the turn of the 19th century, while Herzl was advocating Zionism throughout Europe and Reformers in America were becoming thoroughly American (and consequently anti-Zionist at this point), the Jewish population throughout the world could little imagine the devastation about to be visited upon their European population in the ensuing decades, followed by the ultimate fulfillment of Herzl's Basle prophecy.

The Holocaust and the formation of the modern Jewish State of Israel

At the close of World War I, in 1918, the Ottoman Empire had dissolved and along with it, its rule of Palestine. The British Empire now controlled the Promised Land. This dawning of British rule in Palestine promised results for the Zionists. The British government endorsed the Balfour Declaration, which advocated the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine.⁷⁹ In 1922, the League of Nations granted Britain a

⁷⁸ Thorsten Borz-Borstein, "Ethnophilosophy, Comparative Philosophy, Pragmatism: Toward a Philosophy of Ehtnoscares," in *Philosophy East and West*, Volume 56, Number 1, January 2006, p. 162.

⁷⁹ Arnow, David. "The Holocaust and the birth of Israel: Reassessing the causal relationship." *Journal of Israeli History* 15, no. 3 (1994): 259.

mandate over Palestine.⁸⁰ Jews from Europe, mainly Poland and Russia, made aliyah (ascent or immigration) to Israel during these years. British rule and favor for Jews, along with the aliyahs, incited violence by the Arab population of Palestine. In Hebron, which is where Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were buried, Arab militants massacred Jews in 1929. A report detailing the violence caused Great Britain to end all immigration to Israel.⁸¹

Meanwhile, the nascent Nazi Party in Germany began persecuting the Jewish population there. The American Jewish Congress declared a boycott of German goods in 1933 to protest the persecution.⁸² That same year, Adolph Hitler became chancellor of Germany, sealing the fate of Jews throughout Europe. During the first six years of his rule, in peacetime, Hitler practiced two forms of violence against the Jewish population: “the spontaneous, highly emotional, uncontrolled violence of the pogrom, and the cool, systematic, legal and regulated violence of the state, expressed through law and police power.”⁸³ By the close of 1938, the “economic power of the Jews [in Germany] had been destroyed.”⁸⁴

By the outset of World War II with Germany’s invasion and defeat of Poland, Hitler’s Nazi Party already had a plan to exterminate the Jewish population in Europe. Jews were worked and starved to death in the beginning year of the war.⁸⁵ By 1940, allowances for Jews (war rations and pay) were abolished and by 1941 Jews were forced to wear the Star of David on their clothing, literally marking them as the scapegoats for

⁸⁰ Ibid, 259.

⁸¹ “British rule in Palestine,” *Jewish Virtual Library*, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/brits.html> (accessed March 13, 2011).

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Johnson, 483.

⁸⁴ Johnson, 485.

⁸⁵ Johnson, 489.

German suffering. During this time, Jews were being moved to labor camps (which would become the concentration camps implementing Hitler's Final Solution).⁸⁶

As the German military moved into Russia, they immediately disposed of the Jewish population, rounding them up and killing them en masse. Meanwhile, German SS officials were experimenting with lethal gases in anticipation of implementing the Final Solution in Auschwitz (Poland). The Nazis were efficient killers:

There were about 8,861,800 Jews in the countries of Europe directly or indirectly under Nazi control. Of these it is calculated that the Nazis killed 5,933,900, or about 67 percent. In Poland, which had by far the largest number, 3,300,000, over 90 percent, were killed. The same percentage was reached in the Baltic States, Germany and Austria, and over 70 percent were killed in the Bohemian Protectorate, Slovakia, Greece and the Netherlands. More than 50 percent of the Jews were killed in White Russia, the Ukraine, Belgium, Yugoslavia, Rumania and Norway.⁸⁷

The five gas chambers at Auschwitz could kill 60,000 people every 24 hours. From 1942 through 1944 Nazis daily killed approximately 100,000 people in cold blood. Most of these were Jewish.⁸⁸

When World War II ended in 1945 with the defeat of Nazi Germany and the death of Adolph Hitler, the world at last openly discovered and acknowledged the atrocities committed in Nazi-held territories. Shock and disbelief settled in; and yet, despite the world's awareness of the mass killing and seeming sympathy for the victims, anti-Semitism still burned in some European countries. For example, in the months between the end of World War II and 1947, holocaust survivors returning to their homes in Poland

⁸⁶ Johnson, 490-491

⁸⁷ Johnson, 497.

⁸⁸ Johnson, 498.

witnessed a renewed and violent eruption of anti-Semitism. Some 1,500 Holocaust survivors were murdered in Poland.⁸⁹

The European Jewry were virtually destroyed, and henceforward, until the 1970s, the United States would claim the largest concentration of Jewish people.⁹⁰ Twenty-one members of Hitler's Third Reich were tried for war crimes in Nuremberg, Germany. America conducted a series of war crimes trials in the ensuing years, prosecuting 177 defendants.⁹¹

The United Nations formed after World War II to maintain international peace. The UN adopted, in 1947, a partition plan, which divided Palestine into two nations, one Arab and one Jewish, both independent of British rule.⁹² Johnson wrote in *A History of the Jews*:

The Holocaust and the new Zion were organically connected. The murder of six million Jews was a prime causative factor in the creation of the State of Israel. This was in accordance with an ancient and powerful dynamic of Jewish history: redemption through suffering... The creation of Israel was the consequence of Jewish suffering.⁹³

The Arab population of Palestine rose against the Jewish nation in their midst, and a war for Israeli independence ensued. By 1948, Israel Jews had gained their independent nation. Herzl's solution was implemented just where and about when he

⁸⁹ Arnov, pp. 267-268.

⁹⁰ Hasia Diner, "American Jewish History," *Oxford Handbooks Online: The Oxford Handbook of Jewish Studies*, www.oxfordhandbooks.com (Oxford University Press, 2011). Accessed April 16, 2011.

⁹¹ "An Introduction to War Crimes Trials," *Jewish Virtual Library*, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Holocaust/crimesintro.html> (accessed March 13, 2011).

⁹² "United Nations (UN)," *Jewish Virtual Library*, http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud_0002_0020_0_20209.html (accessed March 13, 2011).

⁹³ Johnson, 519.

prophesized it would be. After this date, the “world’s Jewish scene was bifurcated between the United States and Israel, “with other Jewish communities playing a minor role.”⁹⁴

The Holocaust Museum in Jerusalem, Yad Vashem, sells a poignant silver memorial pin. The base of the pin is a piece of barbed wire, representing the Holocaust. Two leaves sprouting from the top of the barbed wire represent the hope and fulfillment of Zionism: the State of Israel. The pin is in a jacket, the cover of which reads, “Remembering the Past, Shaping the Future.” This simple pin perfectly illustrates Johnson’s assertion that the formation of the modern Jewish State of Israel was a direct result of the sufferings endured during Holocaust.⁹⁵



<http://www1.yadvashem.org>

Reform Judaism in America after World War II

Prior to World War II and the Holocaust, Reform Judaism in America critically viewed Zionism as a secular and political movement with no place on a religious agenda.

⁹⁴ Rubinstein, Hillary L., et al, *The Jews in the Modern World: A History Since 1750*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 226.

⁹⁵ From a visit to Yad Vashem during the UW Israel Discovery Seminar, July 13, 2011, conducted by Dr. Gad Barzilai.

Israel was a people and not a place. The Pittsburgh Platform declared, “We consider ourselves no longer a nation, but a religious community, and therefore expect neither a return to Palestine... nor the restoration of any of the laws concerning the Jewish state.”⁹⁶

Beryl Harold Levy wrote in his 1933 book entitled *Reform Judaism in America*:

Every last trace of national allegiance to Palestine in the Jewish heritage was to be disregarded. A Jew was now a Jew in precisely the same sense as a Protestant Christian was a religious sectarian. The exclusive allegiance of each, as a citizen, went to the state in which he resided. American Jews might regard themselves as especially fortunate for in America, indeed, was the precise augury of the new Zion.⁹⁷

As anti-Semitism in Europe rose, however, pro-Zionist philosophy in America did likewise, albeit tenuously. The 1937 Columbus Platform, drawn up more than 50 years after the Pittsburgh one, eloquently asserted, “Judaism is the historical religious experience of the Jewish people... *Judaism is the soul of which Israel is the body.*”⁹⁸ The Columbus Platform declared that all Jewry had an obligation to support a Jewish homeland in Israel.⁹⁹ Subsequently, after the Holocaust and the formation of the modern state of Israel, Reform Judaism’s philosophy with regard to Zionism became one of an evermore steadfast support.

By 1976, the Central Conference of American Rabbis “described the spiritual state of Reform Judaism” in *A Centenary Perspective*. Included in the document was high praise for the State of Israel. For example, the Rabbis wrote, “The State of Israel, through its many accomplishments, raised our sense of Jews as a people to new heights

⁹⁶ Beryl Harold Levy. *Reform Judaism in America: A Study in Religious Adaptation*. (New York: Beryl Levy, 1933), p. 131.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Wigoder, *The Encyclopedia of Judaism*, p. 539. (Emphasis mine.)

⁹⁹ Arnow, p. 263.

of aspiration and devotion.”¹⁰⁰ In addition, they wrote, “The State of Israel, established and maintained by the Jewish will to live, demonstrates what a united people can accomplish through history.”¹⁰¹

The Six Day War of 1967, so prominent on the Temple Beth El entrance hallway timeline, had special meaning for Reformers in America. During the war, outnumbered Israeli forces soundly defeated combined forces from several Arab countries. In 1978, Reform author Eugene Borowitz wrote that the faith Reform Judaism placed in humanity had been lost, destroyed by the Holocaust. Yet, the loss of this aspect of their faith was replaced by one gained during the Six Day War:

Most observers agree that the special attachment of American Jews to the State of Israel became evident during the Six Day War of 1967. Before then the State of Israel seemed only another routine fact of life and, for most American Jews, a rather marginal one. The war brought even the Jews who had previously little attachment to the Jewish community, to the recognition that the State of Israel was important to them personally and thus that they were very much more a part of the Jewish people than they had imagined.¹⁰²

Anita Sharp succinctly wrote in a 2011 article for the *Association of Jewish Studies Journal*, “... after the Six-day War... Gone was the separation between past and present. The past had become concrete in the present...”¹⁰³ The victory concretized the Jewish people’s realization of a return to their historic homeland and thus a national home in Israel.

¹⁰⁰ Eugene B. Borowitz. *Reform Judaism Today*. (New York: Behrman House, 1977), p. xx.

¹⁰¹ Borowitz, p. xxv.

¹⁰² Borowitz, p. 70.

¹⁰³ Anita Shapira, “The Bible and Israeli Identity,” *AJS Review*, 28, no. 1 (2004) p. 34, <http://journals.cambridge.org.offcampus.lib.washington.edu>.

The Jewish Community in Tacoma

Just as the Jewish people need the land to live a full life, so the land needs the Jewish people to be complete. -- Martin Buber¹⁰⁴

I would consider moving to Israel. I see it as my absolute destiny.
-- South Sound Jewish respondent

Rabbi Bruce Kadden of Temple Beth El in Tacoma wrote recently that his Reform community is committed to supporting the State of Israel. They celebrated the 60th anniversary of Israel in 2008 with a speech given to the community by Washington Governor Christine Gregoire. The community has a sister city in Israel, Kiryat-Motzkin, sponsored by Tacoma, but supported by members of the Temple community. Kadden said, "We actively support other Jewish organizations which support Israel such as the Jewish National Fund, and the Tacoma Jewish Community Fund, which raises money for Israel and local Jewish groups."¹⁰⁵

Tacoma's Jewish Community hosted an April 14, 2011 showing of the movie, *O Jerusalem!*, at the Blue Mouse Theater in Tacoma, in support of Kiryat Motzkin.¹⁰⁶ Guest speaker Assaf Nisenboym, a Jewish student from Israel, spoke at the event about the experience of living in Israel. He asserted that, in Israel, the terms pro-Palestinian and pro-Israeli do not contradict. "The people on both sides wish for nothing more than peace."

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, p. 11.

¹⁰⁵ Rabbi Bruce Kadden, e-mail message to author, March 4, 2011.

¹⁰⁶ Event attended by author.

The April 14 event marked just one of the community's efforts to support Israel. Rabbi Kadden elaborated, "Reform Judaism is very supportive of Israel and of Zionism. Reform Judaism has a growing presence within Israel that is strongly supported by Reform Jews in the United States, but most reform Jews are supportive of Israel as a whole."¹⁰⁷ One Temple member wrote that Israel is "a Jewish homeland providing the opportunity for individual growth and achievement free of the various forms of anti-Semitism found around the world for centuries."¹⁰⁸ Unfortunately, some forms of anti-Semitism currently arise in the Puget Sound Region.

Incidentally, in his work entitled *Temple Beth El: A Forecast for the Period from 2000 to 2020*, Mitchell F. Bloom anticipated growth for the Temple; and yet, he also listed "alternative scenarios" which might result in an increase or decrease of Temple membership. One alternate scenario which Bloom predicts could increase Temple membership is simply "anti-Semitism arises." Bloom painted one scenario, "The middle class shrinks and many people, looking for a scapegoat, accuse the Jews as being responsible for their plight." Such an advent, Bloom predicts, would witness the Temple become a center whose "additional purpose is to counter the attacks on Jews."¹⁰⁹

One Temple member wrote about her recent experience with anti-Semitism. She is a high school teacher in the South Sound region. One day in January 2011, upon entering her classroom, she discovered that someone had left a swastika and other hate epithets on a note addressed to her. The high school summoned the police who quickly

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Temple Beth-el member, -mail message to authro, February 27, 2011.

¹⁰⁹ Mitchell F. Bloom, Ph.D., C.F.P. "Temple Beth El: A Forecast for the Period 2000 to 2020" as reported to the Board of Temple Beth El, December 16, 1996. From the special collections of the *Northwest Room*, Tacoma Public Library, p. 25.

discovered the responsible student. The student was expelled and tried for hate crimes. In February, the student was sentenced to participate in a 10-hour diversity training course through the United States Holocaust Museum as part of the court order.¹¹⁰ This same woman, persecuted in her own classroom, wrote of Israel, "Israel represents a place I hope to go where I can freely be Jewish."¹¹¹

Another Temple member wrote that when she was a young girl in California, her best friend decided one Christmas season that she would no longer associate with her. When she asked her friend why, she replied, "because you killed Jesus." She was not allowed to attend dances or swim in the same places her non-Jewish friends went to swim. She wrote, "Israel represents the historic homeland of the Jewish people... and a refuge for Jews all over the world who continue to face persecution." She did clarify that she identifies herself as specifically American; however, her adult daughter and son-in-law have made aliyah to Israel and are raising their family there. She has traveled to Israel nine times.¹¹² In addition, another Temple member wrote of his son and his family, who made aliyah in 1980. He has visited Israel 25-30 times since then.

Another temple member asserted, "I would consider moving to Israel. I see it as my absolute destiny."¹¹³ Such American Jewish affection for and attachment to the State of Israel represents an important aspect of Jewish history. One key point of Jewish studies in the 21st century is the worldwide recognition of United States' Jewish history as a 'crucial component of the world Jewish experience.' Some graduate students of

¹¹⁰ Personal correspondence with a Temple member, March 2011.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Personal correspondence with a Temple member, February 2011.

¹¹³ Personal correspondence with a Temple member, March 2011.

Jewish studies who used to focus primarily on European Jewish history have changed focus to American Jewish history. This shift reflects the 'global dimension to Jewish history'--no longer the sole domain of European study.¹¹⁴

It is important to note here that American Jewish history is, however, uniquely American. Historian Hasia Diner wrote, "That Jews in America from an early date picked up on ideas of individual choice, voluntary community 'membership,' and the right of individuals to define their own identities, underscores the fact that the history of Jews in America cannot be disentangled from American history,..."¹¹⁵

Conclusion

Jewish history is a tragic story stretching across thousands of years and marked by exile, oppression, discrimination, and genocide. Yet, throughout this history, Jewish people maintained their faith, even in exile and under extreme duress. In the late nineteenth century, plagued by anti-Semitism, the Jewish population in Europe looked to Zionist ideology to foster and establish a home in the Promised Land, a nation state for the Jewish people in the land of Palestine. Another hope blossomed across the Atlantic, in the United States, where Reform Judaism flourished and lived in relative freedom from persecution. Zionist philosophy and Reform Judaism were opposed ideologies until the tragedy of the Holocaust during World War II and subsequent formation of the State of Israel. Once Israel was established and triumphantly met the threat posed by Arab

¹¹⁴ Hasia Diner, "American Jewish History," *Oxford Handbooks Online: The Oxford Handbook of Jewish Studies*, www.oxfordhandbooks.com (Oxford University Press, 2011). Accessed April 16, 2011.

¹¹⁵ Hasia Diner, "Why Historians Ignore American Jewish History," *American Jewish History*, 95, no. 1 (2009): p. 39.

enemies during the Six Day War in 1967, Reformers in America identified with and fully supported the State of Israel and Zionist philosophy.

In Tacoma, various members of the Temple Beth El community share the Jewish experience of anti-Semitism and clearly see the State of Israel as a safe haven, a hope for freedom from persecution should the need arise. The Temple supports and venerates Israel and likely will do so throughout time. Perhaps Israel offers hope that the tragic aspects of Jewish history will be transformed into the triumphant ones of the future.

Will we be bound only in the covenant of fate? When we suffer together, when we face a common enemy, we will unite because we have shared tears, shared fears, so we will huddle together for comfort and mutual protection? Or will we be bound by the fact that we share dreams, aspirations, ideals? We will not need a common enemy, because we will have a common hope? We will come together to create something new, beautiful and exciting? Will we be defined not by what happens to us but by what we commit to do? Not by a covenant of fate, but by a bond of faith?¹¹⁶

--Rabbi Berry Farkash

¹¹⁶ "Jews of the world, unite!" *JT News*, <http://www.jtnews.net.index.php?/viewpoints/item/8207/C30>, (accessed February 27, 2011).

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