1970

Introduction

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INTRODUCTION

IT WAS an exciting experience—one journalist called it "the greatest day of the Council" (G. Valquist)—when on September 28, 1964, bishop after bishop rose to demand an unequivocal, decisive statement on the Church's relationship to the Jews. The late Archbishop of St. Louis, Cardinal Ritter, for instance, exclaimed:

I eagerly await this Declaration: it clearly answers a modern need. The need of which I speak is not to eschew or placate some political or ethnic pressure or to seek men's favor, but simply to repair a centuries-old wrong. For many centuries, we Christians have been guilty of a mistaken and urgent attitude toward the Jews. Frequently we assumed that God abandoned this people. Christians, indeed ecclesiastical documents, accused the Jewish people of being responsible for the passion and death of Christ. In prayers, we called them the "perfidious," the "deicide people" that "once called upon itself the blood of the Saviour." To us who are gathered in this Ecumenical Council, the unique opportunity is given to eradicate these errors and redress the injustices.¹

No less forthright were the words of the Archbishop of Boston, Cardinal Cushing: "I wonder, Venerable Brothers, whether we ought not humbly confess before the world that, with regard to their Jewish brothers, Christians have all too often not proved themselves as true Christians, as Christ's faithful ones."

When the Declaration was finally promulgated on October 28, 1965, it did not come up to everyone's expectation. All wise commentators, however, saw in it a re-vision, a breakthrough, a new beginning; they located its momentum in the future. The great

question is not that overrated “relevance to today” but its meaning for the days-to-come. Similarly, those who can be called the architects of the Statement do not wish to rest on their laurels. They wish to move—but not with undue haste, not with the eagerness of a reporter racing for a “scoop.” Organic growth is rarely instantaneous. As a fertilized egg needs a period of incubation in order to turn into a living bird, so does man’s thought.

The measured pace of the creative process is one of the reasons that this volume of THE BRIDGE has been so long in coming. Another is the Council itself. Its preparation as well as its aftermath—above all, the struggle at the Council for the proper articulation of all that ought to be said on the bond of the Church to the Jewish people, on that people’s pain and endurance, on its permanence and permanent vocation—occupied so much of my time that there was none left. But editorial labor, like all intellectual work, requires continuity.

This, I hope, will explain our long silence and give force to my apology to readers who anxiously awaited this volume as well as to those who feared that we had suspended publication. Originally, THE BRIDGE was conceived as a yearbook. From the start we have not been able to hold to this plan, but the interval has never been as long as that between this volume and the preceding one. We are confident that, from now on, the publication will be at regular, though not necessarily annual, intervals.

A SYMPOSIUM OF PERSONAL TESTIMONY

With this volume, the frame of THE BRIDGE has been changed in one important respect. As a Catholic publication, THE BRIDGE of pre-conciliar days gathered, more as a matter of fact than one of principle, studies and views of Catholic authors; now, without ceasing to be a Catholic publication, its Editors welcome Jewish contributors, and do so most warmly, hoping that others will join them in the future. It goes without saying, that they, though men of learning and distinction, speak, not for Judaism as a whole nor for one of its branches, but for themselves. The same is to be said of the Catholic writers; they do not represent the Church, devoted to her though they are, but seek to serve her by drawing from their mental.

Thus every contributor view may not agree with this writer, or with any other writer. Simultaneously, we respect each writer’s freedom of his view. Some of our readers will agree with; some will disagree with the opinions found here; they will find harmony of views. This is the harmony that is a basic instinct for truth but brings it to light, another thinker, it is to say, clearly. I hope that those views will sound more like the membro last beat will realize that, are present at a rehearsal moments so that they may truly.

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"Is it only the voice of the people?"
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ments.

Thus every contributor gives, in complete freedom, his best. His
view may not agree with that of his neighbor in the volume nor even
with any other writer. Similarly, I myself do not see eye to eye with
everything our contributors have to say. Yet, even when I do not, I
respect each writer’s freedom and the earnestness with which he holds
his view. Some of our readers may be disturbed by the variety of
opinions found here; they might have preferred unanimity, a perfect
harmony of views. This is more than understandable: The desire for
harmony is a basic instinct of man. Yet, dissent is not meant to obscure
truth but bring it to light. If the dissenting view of one challenges
another thinker, it is to make him think harder and speak more
clearly. I hope that those who would have wished our contributors to
sound more like the members of an orchestra playing together to the
last beat will realize that, though they do not hear a symphony, they
are present at a rehearsal where the players tune their various instru-
ments so that they may truly complement and support one another.

Still, it might have been helpful if, in this volume, we could have
had Jewish and Christian authors dialogue with one another, even
the Jewish contributors with each other and, similarly, the Christian
writers. But, apart from the technical difficulties this would have
presented, there is always the danger of such a dialogue looking more
like a dispute, pitting opponents one against the other. There would
have been another possibility of resolving tensions, answering ques-
tions, correcting misconceptions, and so on. When this volume was
in its planning stage, I thought for a while of writing an epilogue that
would have served some of the above functions.

THE COVENANT WITH ISRAEL AND WITH THE CHURCH

I would have liked, for instance, to address myself to one of the prob-
lems Rabbi Petuchowski thinks the Christian theologian must answer,
if there are to be fraternal conversations between Christians and Jews.
“Who . . . is speaking in the Talmud and in the Midrash?” he asks.
“Is it only the voice of the ancient rabbis, or is there discernible, be-
hind their very human overtones and undertones the Voice of Him who had spoken to the prophets and lawgivers of old...?" I think his question (and the corresponding one addressed to Jews) goes, as is his wont, to the heart of the matter. Since he phrases his challenge so carefully, so discreetly, I have no difficulty in saying that the wisdom of the ancient rabbis is often "graced"; that their insights, betraying though they do their own acumen, often show divine influence.

How could I possibly doubt that the rabbis who interceded for their own people and others, who championed the poor or made themselves spokesmen of God's search for His creatures' love, were themselves animated by love and moved by the Spirit? I quote at random:

May it be your will,  
Lord my God and God of my fathers,  
that no hatred against us enter into the hearts of men,  
and no hatred against [other] men into our own.  
May none be jealous of us  
and may we not be jealous of any.  
And may study of the Law be our labor all the days of our lives,  
and may our words be as supplications before you.  

(Jer. Tal., Ber. IV, 2)

Let your house be open;  
let the poor be members of your household.  
Let a man's house be open  
to the north and to the south, to the east and to the west...  
that the poor might not be troubled to go round the house [to the back door]  
but that each would find a door facing him as he approached.  

(Ab. de R.N., 7, 176)

God says to Israel:  
"For all the wonders and mighty deeds  
which I have wrought for you,  
the only reward I ask is  
that you should honor me at my children  
and call me your Father."  

(Ex. R. 32, 5)

But does my or any other Christian's appreciation of these and many other gems of rabbinical literature answer Rabbi Petuchowski's ques-

tion? I think not. To do it takes much more than even the few pages of the

The situation is very much raised by Professor Wyschogrod. Jews who embraced Christianity and thought of the offspring." If I read him right, he was putting the non-insistence of the Christians against the survival of the original Abraham's seed will, in much Christians may have against the survival of the Israel according to the

I wonder whether Professor Wyschogrod was considering that in Jerusalem were for a time the fall of Jerusalem and put by various sects and separated. The original Jewish Christians in the second century were expelled from the life of the Jewish nation. To top it all, whereas the and consciousness, remained joining other Jews in the Temple, fast, the dietary laws, and others. When one keeps these and they set the mood for one to expect that Jewish Christians would have their Jewish only citizenship, but a Christian community. In seizing upon that and on still another, I do not, contrary, I hope to show him

As Professor Wyschogrod...
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I think not. To do it justice, more than these few lines, more than even the few pages of an epilogue would be needed.

The situation is very much the same with regard to a problem raised by Professor Wyschogrod—why the Church "did not insist that Jews who embraced Christianity retain their identity as Abraham's offspring." If I read him right, he asks the question in anguish, for to him the non-insistence of the Church implies that she does not believe Abraham's seed will, in God's providence, remain. But, however much Christians may have betrayed their own belief, by sinning against the survival of the Jewish people, it is Christian belief that the Israel according to the flesh will continue till the end of time.

I wonder whether Professor Wyschogrod does not pose his problem outside its historical context. While the early Jewish Christians in Jerusalem were for a time the Church, those of a later day (after the fall of Jerusalem and particularly after Bar Kokba's defeat) split into various sects and separated themselves from the universal Church. The original Jewish Christians kept their faith in Christ pure, the later ones tended to syncretism and heresy. Thus the authoritative position and the distinction of the Jerusalem community in apostolic times gave way to the low esteem in which splinter groups are held. To top it all, whereas the young Church, despite her particular way and consciousness, remained within the bosom of the Jewish people—joining other Jews in the Temple, keeping the set hours of prayer, the fast, the dietary laws, and other practices—the Jewish Christians of the second century were expelled from the synagogues and kept apart from the life of the Jewish community. Indeed, Jews were forbidden to have any traffic with them.

When one keeps these conditions of early Christianity in mind—and they set the mood for much later times!—it seems unrealistic to expect that Jewish Christians should, indeed could, have kept their identity. They would have been trapped in a limbo: they might have turned out to be neither Jews nor Christians. It is to be hoped that the State of Israel will develop in such a way as to give Jewish Christians, not only citizenship, but also an honorable place in the life of the community. In seizing upon this problem of Professor Wyschogrod, and on still another, I do not wish to cross swords with him; on the contrary, I hope to show him my respect.

As Professor Wyschogrod sees it, the "nations, as represented by
the Church, seek the God of Abraham. This is a fact that has never impressed itself into the Jewish consciousness. . . . Israel has never grasped that there is a segment of the gentile world into which the word of the God of Abraham has penetrated." He holds that the gentiles have thus been addressed by the Lord God, are loved by Him, who is their Father. Still, he sees them as those who are not chosen; he even asks "that the nations who seek the God of Israel . . . meditate on their non-election." To a Christian mind the two major assertions here do not square; for a Christian, "to be addressed and to be loved" simply means "to be chosen." For Professor Wyschogrod, however, "election" seems to mean that on Israel, and on Israel alone, is laid the burden of the mitzvot, those commands that are Israel's daily fare. This is a beautiful thought, indeed. And it is, of course, true that Christians do not feel themselves bound by those ordinances that regulate all the waking hours of a Jew.

But Professor Wyschogrod goes further: "The Church's claim of being the new people of God . . . is, from the Jewish point of view, another example of the nations' protest against the election of the stock of Abraham." Again, "Israel cannot fail to see in this claim an act of rebellion against the word of God." Some Christians may see this as Jewish pride; if they do, they are wrong. I cannot imagine a more humble essay than Professor Wyschogrod's; to the sentence above he adds this clause: "however much guilt Israel shares in this rebellion." Still, I cannot agree. I would like first to reiterate the Church's claim in the words of her own prayers. At the Easter Vigil, she implores God: Praesta, ut in Abrahae filios et in israelitaeam dignitatem totius mundi transeat plenitude; "Grant that the whole world be raised to the ranks of Abraham's sons and share the dignity of Israel." Or, in a different version of the same petition: Da, ut omnes gentes, Israelis privilegium merito fidei consecutae, Spiritus tui participatione regenerantur; "Grant that by faith all nations attain Israel's privilege and be renewed in the Holy Spirit." I can well understand that a prayer like this may offend Jews when it is said by me who wish to enslave them. I can well understand that Israel feels constrained to reject a claim by Christians to be Abraham's spiritual sons when Christians seek to take the place of the natural sons. Yet, the prayer does not speak of replacement but of sharing, in the original Latin even of "passing over."
This is a fact that has never been questioned... Israel has never been a mere world into which people are admitted." He holds that the God of Israel... meditate in the two major assertions 'He is addressed and to be loved' for Wyschogrod, however, addressed on Israel alone, is laid on Israel alone, is laid that are Israel's daily fare.

It is, of course, true that by those ordinances that

"The Church's claim of the Jewish point of view, against the election of the will to see in this claim an Some Christians may see strong. I cannot imagine a Wyschogrod's; to the sentence guilt Israel shares in this like first to reiterate theayers. At the Easter Vigil, filios et in israeliticam "Grant that the whole nations and share the dignity same petition: Da, ut ei consecutae, Spiritus tui faith all nations attain Holy Spirit." I can well Jews when it is said by understand that Israel feels to be Abraham's spiritual one. The of the natural sons. Yet, of sharing, in the original

Today, when such pleas and claims are made humbly, and not triumphantly, I see no reason why they could not be reconciled with a traditional stance. There is, above all, that exciting vision of a highway leading from Egypt to Assyria: the two hostile countries will be friends, forming with Israel (as their link) a triple alliance; the high road will no longer be used by armies but by pilgrims—all serving the one Lord. Then He will say:

Blessed be my people Egypt,
The work of my hands Assyria,
And my property Israel.
(Is 19:23–25)

It is not Egypt and Assyria who usurp Israel's titles of honor, God Himself accords them. Again, the rabbis could be fierce in condemning the nations who mistreat Israel, but they are no less determined in their praise of those gentiles who seek to do God's will. "The righteous among the gentiles are priests of God," is one of their great sayings. Another goes like this:

I call heaven and earth to witness
that be he gentile or Israelite,
man or woman, slave or handmaid, according to the deeds he does,
so will the Holy Spirit rest on him.2

From these ecstatic statements of the ancient rabbis to the Church's vision of herself as a priestly people, as a body quickened by the Holy Spirit, is, it seems to me, but a small step. But whether or not my argument is found convincing, this much is certain: None of the Christian contributors to this volume think that the conciliatory Statement on the Jews compels him to view the Jews as God's people no longer.

ANTI-JEWISHNESS IN THE GOSPELS?

There is still another problem I would have liked to tackle: the

2. For this and other pertinent texts, as well as incisive comments, see Monte­
differing views of Professors Ford and Schubert on early Christian polemics against the Judaism of the time. Professor Ford stresses that they are instances "of the traditional conflict between Jew and Jew," that is of inner Jewish disputes, which almost always were quite vehement. Dr. Schubert, too, sees an "inner Jewish controversy" (p. 145), yet he calls the polemical utterances, particularly of Matthew, "anti-Jewish." In this difference of opinions, I side with Professor Ford, though in many other matters Professor Schubert and I think very much alike. We all agree, of course, that the polemics have often been misinterpreted; that this misreading has injured Jews in body and soul, while it has damaged Christians spiritually. It misled them into "boasting," into "thinking themselves superior" (Rom 11:19) to those "wicked Jews."

Professor Schubert certainly argues his thesis well—but is his case beyond dispute? It would be useful were I able to discuss the thoroughly "Jewish" character of Matthew’s Gospel whose great theme is "righteousness." There is no theme more Jewish than this. I also ought to show that much of what is called "anti-Jewish" is a protest against Jewish officialdom; it bears, to employ the jargon of our time, all the earmarks of a confrontation with the establishment. Much depends on the exegesis of certain Matthean passages. There is, for instance, a Jerusalem unhappy, indeed, upset by the news that a child had been born who was to be "King of Israel" or, as the non-Jewish Magi called him, "King of the Jews." "King Herod was greatly perturbed when he heard this; and so was the whole of Jerusalem" (Mt 2:3). What does the second half of this sentence mean? Does the evangelist wish to show that Jesus was rejected by His own people at the very moment His birth was made known; that from the very beginning He was unwelcome, a cause of fear rather than joy, thereby revealing Israel’s resistance to grace? Some exegesis think so. But the majority of those I have consulted hold a different view. They insist that Herod’s and the people’s fear were not of the same kind. Herod’s soul was in tumult because this new "aspirant to kingship" might rend the scepter from him or his family. The people panicked because they knew and dreaded their king. They distrusted him; ethnically, he was a half-Jew and, spiritually, a pagan who built temples in honor of Apollo and Augustus. They loathed him as an usurper of the throne; it was hated Rome that had given him the title king. They feared him for he heard the news, they expected they were not certain who would alarm among Jerusalem.

Bearing this in mind, the Then there is the puzzling palace: "His blood on us are two schools of thought: certain did not think of was not directed against the. Educator or his fellow disciples could school holds that, even if the people as a lynching mob exemple of the German people was indeed representative of Holy City and pilgrims from spoke in the name of the their clamor to all Israel. So the blood of Jesus upon was cursed their own people.

I think the problem interpretation I would have given have no great trouble in one takes it as an illustration. I see no difficulty in holding consisted of? Delegates of Cross-section narrative suggests this. It Zealots, men who fought the Roman yoke. What loudness and pugnacity.
Professor Ford stresses that "...as a matter of Jewish controversy" (p. 13), I side with Professor Ford, Schubert and I think very particularly of Matthew, 2:25, where I interpret the pessimistic "we are..." (Rom. 11:19) to mean we well, but is his case true? Here I am able to discuss the author's Gospel whose great and more Jewish than this. I called "anti-Jewish" is a term, to employ the jargon of polemics. The exegetes think so. But I hold a different view. They were not of the same kind. "King Herod was greatly upset by the news of the death of his own people at His own hand; that from the very near rather than joy, thereby the people panicked. They distrusted him; actually, a pagan who built a temple. The people feared him for he was ruthless and cruel. As soon as they heard the news, they expected some harsh "preventive measures" but were not certain who would be their target. "Reason enough for alarm among Jerusalemites of every kind" (Paul Gaechter, S.J.). Bearing this in mind, the second interpretation seems far weightier.

Then there is the puzzle of that dire cry before the governor's palace: "His blood on us and our children!" (Mt 27:25). Here, too, are two schools of thought. One says, the whole scene is too unreal to be historical. There is no imaginable reason for the people of Jerusalem and the pilgrims to the feast to desire Jesus' death. The people certainly did not think of Him as a seditionist who would get them into trouble; many among them loved Him. Another school maintains that one cannot doubt the historicity of the outbreak. Only an apostate of the worst kind, hating Israel with all his soul, could have invented a saying that, on the one hand, was distinctly Jewish and, on the other, was directed against the Jewish people—but neither the evangelist nor his fellow disciples come under this category (Gaechter). The first school holds that, even if the cry was actually uttered by a crowd, small and gone wild, it was not as little representative of the Jewish people as a lynching mob would be of the American or an SS detachment of the German people. The other school counters: The crowd was indeed representative for it was composed of inhabitants of the Holy City and pilgrims from all the countries where Jews lived. They spoke in the name of the whole people, therefore Matthew attributes their clamor to all Israel. And there can be no doubt that, in wishing the blood of Jesus upon themselves, they spurned their Messiah and cursed their own people.

I think the problem important enough to sketch, at least, the interpretation I would have given more fully, had I written an epilogue. I have no great trouble in accepting the scene as historical but even if one takes it as an illustration by the evangelist of his theological stand, I see no difficulty in holding my view. Who were the men the crowd consisted of? Delegates of the people? Their elected officials? Definitely not. A cross-section of the population? Hardly; nothing in the narrative suggests this. It is much more likely that the hard core were Zealots, men who fought recklessly for the liberation of Israel from the Roman yoke. What they lacked in number, they made up in loudness and pugnacity. Only a few moments before they had asked...
for the release of Bar-Abbas, a notorious lēstēs, a bandit or, rather, a guerrilla (see Mt 27:21). Soon after Jesus had begun His public ministry, the Zealots looked to Him as their leader in the war of liberation-to-come. They had even tried to proclaim Him king, only to be rebuffed (Jn 6:15). Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem must have given them the idea that, at long last, He was ready to step forward and lead them on. When they finally realized that He would not do their bidding, their admiration turned into rancor. There is no deadlier hatred than that of an unrequited lover. Hence the passion, maybe even the relish, with which they shouted: “Crucify him! Crucify him!” (Mt 27:22–23). He had abandoned, even deceived them, they felt—there was no reason, then, for standing by Him.

But why would they have cursed themselves? They did not. “His blood on us and our children” is, I think, an echo of the mishnaic warning given to witnesses in capital trials, so as not to stain their souls with the blood of the accused by rendering false testimony. This was done, as is expressly stated, to instill fear into them so that they would cling to the truth. They were reminded that criminal proceedings were different from property disputes. In the latter, a man could make amends for an untrue statement by paying compensatory damages. Not so in capital cases where the life of a man was at stake. Should the accused be unjustly executed, his blood and that of his potential offspring would be on the perjurer until the end of the world (see Sanh. 37a; Soncino ed., p. 233). In the light of this tradition, which embodies Israel’s unique regard for the life of every individual, it is most probable that, by their cry, the men outside the praetorium wished to protest their guiltlessness. They were indeed ready to take on themselves the responsibility for Jesus’ death but only because their guerrilla minds considered it well deserved.

If this is so, why does the evangelist tell the story? Does he wish to describe an incident totally unrelated to the fate of the Jewish people or does he see in the episode before the governor’s residence a foreshadowing of things-to-come. I think the latter. But the “things-to-come” that are foreshadowed by the terrifying cry and the ill-conceived choice are not the total subsequent history of Israel till the final judgment day but events that have happened in the evangelist’s lifetime and that of his readers. He is much too concerned with the period he lives in to look into the millennia ahead of his people. Those events (following on the episode) no doubt, the catastrophings that went with it. V, palace and the lonely...
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The story? Does he wish to the fate of the Jewish the governor's residence a he latter. But the "things-sifying cry and the ill-con-rey of Israel till the final ed in the evangelist's life-concerned with the period of his people. Those events

(coming on the episode he tells and contemporary with his life) are, no doubt, the catastrophic end of the war against Rome and the sufferings that went with it. With the exception of three towers of Herod's palace and the lonely Western Wall, Jerusalem was razed to the ground and the Temple burnt down. "There is no beauty like the beauty of Jerusalem," a rabbinical saying goes (Ab de R.N. 28; Yale Judaica, X, 116). Now, this beauty was gone; in fact, the few ruins looked like mockery. According to Tacitus's estimate, 600,000 Jews lost their lives; Josephus Flavius almost doubles the number. Though this bloodletting was the work of Titus and his soldiers, the ultimate cause was the fanaticism of the Zealots; they had established a terror regime in the City forcing the inhabitants to make common cause with them.

It is told that Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai, on hearing that the Roman general besieging the City had offered to withdraw if the resisters would, as a sign of their subjection, send one bow and one arrow, said to the men of Jerusalem: "My children, why do you destroy this city and why do you seek to burn the Temple? For what is it that he asks of you? Verily, he asks naught of you save one bow or one arrow, and he will go off from you." But the men he pleaded with answered: "... we shall go forth against him and slay him" (Ab de R.N. 4; op. cit., p. 35). Rabbi Yochanan tried again and again, to no avail. Seeing the radicalization of the "men of Jerusalem," he realized that the end of the City was near. He decided to make a new start and had himself carried out in a coffin to the Roman general's tent. There he asked and received permission to establish a house of study in Yavneh (ibid., p. 36), thereby saving Judaism from extinction.

To return to the evangelist, he must have seen in the outcry at the governor's palace and in the choice of Bar-Abbas over Jesus, the sealing of Jerusalem's fate. To understand the decision of the multitude in its far-reaching consequence, one must remember the conflict between Jesus and the Zealots in all its depth. He rejected their black and bitter zeal (see Mt 5:38ff, Lk 6:27ff). He ruled out violence as a means of establishing God's reign (Mt 11:12). He cautioned His people against "imposters" who would "claim to be messiahs or prophets" (Mt 24:26). He warned against them as "thieves and robbers," as self-seeking "hirelings" (Jn 10:8, 12f). Indeed, His whole message implied that the enemy of the Kingdom was not Rome, as
the Zealots never tired to proclaim, but all those who, in one way or another, cried "Lord, Lord!" yet refused to do the will of the Father (Mt 7:21). He knew, preached, and lived the one way to the Kingdom: the sacrifice of self. By crying "Crucify him!" and "His blood upon us and our children!" the men at the praetorium showed that theirs was the spirit of the Zealots: They not only left Jesus in the hands of Pontius Pilate to be crucified, they also determined that Jerusalem would not walk the road of peace but that of war. Thus the few decided the fate of the many; literally, they brought blood on their sons and daughters.

In saying this, I do not subscribe to the notion of collective guilt. This is not a biblical doctrine. True, there are many passages in Scripture that to our ears suggest a collective guilt. What they really imply is the solidarity of all Israel. The whole of Jerusalem suffered for the attitude and acts of a militant minority, not because all Jerusalem was guilty but because it was a community. Nowhere is this noble principle better expressed than in the Talmud: "Lo, it is written: 'And they shall stumble one upon another' (Lev 26:37), one because of the iniquity of the other; this teaches us that all Israel are sureties one for another!" (Sheb. 39a; Soncino, p. 238). *Kol Yisrael 'arevin zeb-zeb,* "all Israel are responsible for one another"—communal solidarity is a principle that does not demoralize men, as does the depressing notion of collective guilt. It heightens responsibility and shows the awesomeness of every man's role in the world. When Matthew claimed that "the whole people cried: His blood on us and our children!" the "whole people" must be understood in the light of the teaching that all Israelites and, for that matter, all men are responsible for, and dependent on, indeed thrown upon, one another for good and evil. If I am right, then the Gospels are most Jewish when they seem anti-Jewish. Further, as soon as "anti-Jewish polemics" are recognized as experiences of a family quarrel, as utterances of a war among brothers at a given time, then it is immediately clear that gentile Christians cannot, without violating propriety and fairness, use these polemical utterances against Jews; they might, if need be, hurl them against their very own. In such application is, I think, the lasting significance of this strife and its consequences.

I have dealt with the "anti-Jewish" character of certain evangelical utterances so extensively—though by no means completely—because they pose a problem thorough investigation others, least of all a scholar as Kurt Schenkel. He show that the area of the great progress in or satisfied. None of us learn and is willing to to a deeper understanding to this volume desires: "It is not your part to sit from it" (Ab. 2, 1).

**THE CONCILIAR**

**PERSONAL, and thus are, they all show the the relationship of Je to what I like to can address themselves to of BRIDGE V: "The o go from here?" I do engagewith the f assume, a fact of life future, and thus no creative process, as a and Christians, men Scripture, are thus the great store by the p Church is dying and a live; they live and t future" (E. Roser Strange though it c about us, we b, not the least, o remembers that the n consciously encoun
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they pose a problem of great importance, a problem in need of thorough investigation. I do not mean to press my own view against others, least of all against those of so distinguished and courageous a scholar as Kurt Schubert. If I have accomplished nothing but to show that the area of Judaico-Christian studies is one in which, despite the great progress in our lifetime, much work is still to be done, I am satisfied. None of us possesses the final word; each one has much to learn and is willing to learn, willing not to stand still but to move on to a deeper understanding and a greater love. Each of the contributors to this volume desires to live by the saying of an ancient Jewish sage: "It is not your part to finish the work, but neither are you free to desist from it" (Ab. 2, 16; Soncino, p. 24).

The Conciliar Thrust

Personal, and thus varied, though the contributions to this volume are, they all show the same eagerness to right old wrongs and to lift the relationship of Jews and Christians to a creative plane. Committed to what I like to call "the ministry of reconciliation," the authors address themselves to the one question which is the overriding theme of BRIDGE V: "The conciliar statement on the Jews—Where do we go from here?" I do not think I am too bold if I say, theirs is an engagement with the future. "Future" is not, as most people seem to assume, a fact of life—it is a biblical invention. There can be no true future, and thus no hope, without the biblical concept of time as a creative process, as advance, as a march toward a glorious end. Jews and Christians, men whose mentality, whose faith are shaped by Scripture, are thus the "natural" bearers of the future. I do not set great store by the predictions of those contemporary seers who say the Church is dying and Judaism is becoming a museum-piece. Both are alive; they live and have a future. In fact, they are "the trustees of the future" (E. Rosenstock-Huessy).

Strange though it may sound, my trust that, despite the dark clouds about us, we are moving toward a God-oriented future is based, not the least, on the conciliar statement and its fate. When one remembers that the vast majority of the Council fathers had never consciously encountered its underlying problem, when one remembers
the opposition to it and all its other difficulties, one cannot but see in its acceptance the finger of God. At the time of this writing, it is only four short years since the Council’s approval, still the Statement has come a long way. I could fill a volume by listing all the good it has wrought the world over. I shall limit myself to a few signs that prove, I think, its impact, its thrust.

To begin with a personal experience, in June of 1969, the Institute of Judaeo-Christian Studies together with the Anti-Defamation League of B’nai B’rith, sponsored a study week on Judaism and Christianity called the “Menorah Institute.” When we first planned this Institute, we expected about thirty participants, yet so many applied that we could house only a fraction. Altogether, eighty-seven students participated in the program, most of them with graduate degrees, others candidates for one. But, the eagerness manifest in the large participation was not the “wonder of the week,” as one participant called it. The wonder was that an observant Jew spoke of Torah with such feeling, or interpreted *Pirke Aboth* with such simplicity, that his Christian hearers were inspired, strengthened in their own faith, and led to a deep reverence for his. The wonder was that a Jewish teacher, with yarmulke on his head, could speak of the Gospels or of Paul’s theology with such respect and insight—without ever compromising his own commitment—that the co-existence of Christianity and Judaism ceased to be a problem but became a grace-event. The wonder was that a Christian teacher could cite Talmud or Midrash as if they were his daily fare, whetting his hearers’ appetites for new discoveries. The wonder was that a Christian teacher portrayed the words and works of Jesus against their Jewish background, maintaining, however, that the Jewishness of Jesus was not merely a “background” but an integral part of the New Testament, so woven into it that its removal would destroy the fabric. Thus the students met their Master anew and responded to Him with a new love. All this we owe to the Council’s Statement. In giving credit to the document, we must not overlook the tireless efforts of men like Dr. Joseph L. Lichten.

An example of the momentum of the conciliar Statement on the Jews is the new form of the Good Friday prayer for them that has been proposed by Roman authorities. Rather than give a lengthy description of the development this prayer has undergone in recent years, I am setting the four different stages side by side. Columns one and two contain the prayer and after. Columns three and four contain the impact of the Council, on yet promulgated.

1.

Let us pray also for the un

May the Lord our God

Almighty and everlasting God

Hear the prayers we offer

Through the same our Lord

Amen.

3.

Let us pray also for the Jew

May the Lord our God

Let His countenance shine up so that they, too, may know the Redeemer of all, our L
cannot but see and two contain the prayer before Pope John’s intervention in 1959 and after. Columns three and four show the versions revised under the impact of the Council, one several years old, the other recent and not yet promulgated.

1.

Let us pray also for the unbelieving Jews.

May the Lord our God remove the veil from their hearts so that they, too, may acknowledge our Lord Jesus Christ.

Almighty and everlasting God, you do not refuse your mercy even to Jewish unbelief. Hear the prayers we offer for the blindness of that people. May they acknowledge the light of your truth which is Christ, and may they be brought out of darkness.

Through the same our Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen.

2.

Let us pray also for the Jews.

May the Lord our God remove the veil from their hearts so that they, too, may acknowledge our Lord Jesus Christ.

Almighty and everlasting God, you do not refuse your mercy to the Jews. Hear the prayers we offer for that people. May they acknowledge the light of your truth which is Christ, and may they be brought out of darkness.

Through the same our Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen.

3.

Let us pray also for the Jews.

May the Lord our God let His countenance shine upon them so that they, too, may know the Redeemer of all, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us pray also for the Jews, to whom God spoke first.

May He grant that they advance in the understanding of His word and love.
Almighty and everlasting God
You made Abraham and his descendants
bearers of your promise.
In your loving kindness
hear the prayers of your Church
so that the people you made your own
in olden days
attain the fullness of salvation.
Through Christ our Lord.

Christian friends of mine have told me that they consider the last version still patronizing. I think they are wrong. Knowing the authors of the prayer and their outlook, patronizing is the last way they would like their prayers to sound. By calling the Jews those “to whom God spoke first,” before all others, they wished to acknowledge Israel’s dignity. Whether one believes that this recent version is excellent or whether one assumes that it falls short of the ideal, one thing is beyond doubt: The Church does not use this prayer to proselytize but confines herself to pray for the welfare of the Jewish people. Whether one likes every phrase or not, the prayer as a whole is proof of the dynamism of the conciliar Statement, of its power to shape history.

The crowning example of the dynamic nature of the conciliar Statement on the Jews is the revised order of the Mass. When its news was first made known, some journalists, with their penchant for the sensational, gave all their attention to the altered calendar of the saints. A much more significant change, however, went unnoticed. It concerns the prayer at the offering of bread which used to read:

Holy Father, almighty everlasting God, accept this unblemished host, which I your unworthy servant, offer unto you, my living and true God, for my countless sins, offences and neglects, and on behalf of all who are present here; likewise for all believing Christians living and dead. Accept it for their good and mine, so that it may save us and bring us to everlasting life.

Not only was this prayer wordy, it was also confusing in that it spoke of the bread as if it were already consecrated. The new offertory prayer is much simpler, but this is not all. Of much greater significance is the fact that its blessing Jesus reads:

Blessed:
Through
we have
which
to
It will be
The invocation sounds and kinship with
now, Jews recite gr
the bread:

Baruch a
Hamotsi
Blessed a
You bring
The proposed Ger
with the Hebrew p
du, Herr unser Go

COEXISTENCE OF

To conclude, we reposit the conciliating and kinship of Christians and Judaism. For without this mutual understanding of the role of Judaism, there will be no self-understanding of the role of Judaism.

Christians have a love of the Church, but to our intensity of this other
is the fact that its beginning leans on the Jewish blessing over bread, the blessing Jesus must have used time and again. In the official translation it reads:

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation.
Through your goodness
we have this bread to offer
which earth has given and human hands have made.
It will become for us the bread of life.

The invocation shows continuity with the worshipping Israel of old and kinship with the worshipping Jewish people today. Then and now, Jews recite grace before meals in the form of the blessing over the bread:

\[ \text{Baruch attah Adonay Eloheynu, Melech ha-olam.} \]
\[ \text{Hamotzi lechem min ha-arets.} \]
Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the Universe.
You bring forth bread from the earth.

The proposed German translation renders the invocation in accordance with the Hebrew pattern rather than with the Latin: “Gepriesen bist du, Herr unser Gott, König der Welt.”

COEXISTENCE OF CHRISTIANS AND JEWS

To conclude, we must never forget that one of the principal purposes of the conciliar Statement is to contribute to the self-understanding of Christians and thus to a new self-understanding of the Church. For without this new self-understanding there can be no real understanding of the role of Jews in the history of salvation, as there can be no self-understanding of the Church without a new vision of Judaism.

Christians have always seen in ancient Israel the cradle of the Church, but to our generation is it given to explore the extent and intensity of this origin more fully than ever before. Rare, however, is
the Christian in centuries gone by who saw the continuous interdependence of Christianity and post-biblical Judaism.

The Christian professes "Jesus is the Messiah, the Christ!" Through His word and work the world was redeemed. Though the earth is still shrouded in the darkness of sin—injustice, war, the brutishness of man against man—for the Christian, Jesus is the light that pierces the darkness and keeps him from despair. Though the earth still resounds with the clamor of unbelief, of rebellion against God, the Christian experiences the message of his Master as music of overwhelming power. So overwhelming is his experience that he can chant with one of Israel's poets:

You turned my mourning into dancing;  
You stripped off my sackcloth and wrapped me in gladness.  
And now my heart, silent no longer, will play you music;  
O Lord my God, I will praise you forever.  

(Ps 30[29]:11-12)

To this, Jews counter: Whatever he may be, Jesus is certainly not the Mashiach. The world is still unredeemed; wounds still bleed, tears still run, bodies still writhe with pain, souls still ache, death still reigns. Yet, what keeps the Jew from despair is that he can pray like this:

Master of all worlds!  
Not because of our just deeds  
do we cast our humble prayers before You  
but because of Your abundant mercy.  
What are we?  
What is our life?  
What our love?  
What our justice?  
What our victory?  
What our strength?  
What our might?  
What are we to say before You,  
O Lord our God and God of our fathers?  
Indeed, before Your presence  
the mighty are as nothing ...
Could there be positions further apart than those of Christians and Jews? Christians have often thought that the chasm cannot be bridged except by conversion, which to Jews has always sounded like an invitation to suicide. Jews, particularly in modern times, have often thought that only by abandoning all specific tenets could Christians bridge the gap. But such a bridge, too, is the bridge of death.

I have no doubt that, at the end of ages, the chasm will be closed, even though I do not know exactly by what wonder of grace unity will come. Is it necessary, indeed, possible that in the present con—-for the Christian the "age of the in between," between the first and the second comings of Christ—we do away with the opposing visions of Christians and Jews? Is their polarity not rather meant to be an agent that makes both communities, and the world with them, run toward that final consummation of which the prophets dreamed? Do not both communities, each in its own way, serve the will of God, and though seemingly apart, push together toward the ultimate goal: God's perfect reign and man's delivery from all and every evil?

As for redemption, the Christian extols the "already," the Jew mourns the "not yet." May it not be just this tension that propels both Christians and Jews closer to God? Certainly this tension prevents them from getting settled, makes them remain pilgrims, men and women en route. It is this tension that brings home to them, again and again, that they will forge ahead only inasmuch as they live in hope. According to Gabriel Marcel, real hope is not a detour one takes when the regular road is barred. No, hope opens the world-to-come and takes us into it. It is an affirmation of eternity. It has a prophetic tenor; it does not speak of what might be coming or what will have to be; it says simply: so it will be.

Both Christians and Jews hope that in the end there will be one God and one world; one world because there is one God. So it will be! In the words of the prophet Zechariah (14:9) and the Siddur, the Jewish prayerbook:
We Christians and Jews are thus united in hope. There is indeed an "ecumene of hope" (Kurt Schubert), a brotherhood of men chained to hope. I am borrowing another phrase from the prophet Zechariah (9:12). He calls the Israel in exile asirei ha-tikvah, literally, "prisoners of hope," more freely translated, men hopeful though in chains or, men bearing the happy fetters of hope. Christians and Jews are both men bound to hope, men and women bound to the Lord God and to one another in hope.

One more word or two about this volume. Its structure is the same as that of previous ones; there are four divisions. The first, Studies, explains itself, and so does the last, Books. Under the second heading, Perspectives, we include essays usually shorter than the Studies but of no less significance. They often treat a specialized topic or are tentative in approach. Under Documents, BRIDGE V carries statements by Pope Paul and two American bishops. An important statement on the Church and Judaism by a committee of the World Council of Churches and another emanating from a consultation of Lutheran theologians were not included, simply for lack of space.

At the risk of blowing our own trumpet, we have given priority to statements by members of the Institute of Judaeo-Christian Studies. The fact is that we felt obliged to give some account of our activities. Moreover, the statements of the Editor and other members of the Institute gathered here give some idea of the thoughts that guide us. This, we believe, more than justifies the prevalence of our own communications. In no way do we wish to destroy the character of THE BRIDGE as the fruit of many minds. THE BRIDGE is, and is to be, not only an organ of this Institute but one of a community of scholars who, however different, are bound together by the purpose, not only of exploring the kinship of the two communities, but also of helping to realize that kinship.

This volume bears a distinct title, "Brothers in Hope," and so will future volumes now being prepared. Without ceasing to be part of a series, each volume will thus stand on its own. The present title bespeaks the special personality of BRIDGE V, though its full meaning will be clear only once: The God of Thus the two must hope and good wo
There is indeed brotherhood of men from the prophet atri ha-tikvah, ted, men hopeful of hope. Christians women bound to scripture is the same The first, Studies, the second heading, the Studies but of ical or are tentative statements by Pope statement on the world Council of rion of Lutheran pace. we given priority Christian Studies. of our activities. members of the that guide us. of our own character of THE nd is to be, not of scholars who, not only of ex- of helping to ve," and so will be part of a present title be- full meaning will be clear only after the book is read. This much is apparent at once: The God of Abraham is the God of Jews and of Christians. Thus the two must not be aliens, much less enemies, but brothers in hope and good works.

JOHN M. OESTERREICHER