

## CAN YOU ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS?

1. Chacham Yitzchak Bernays was the Chief Rabbi of Hamburg during Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch's formative years. Describe his outstanding accomplishments and the impact that he had on Rav Hirsch's life.
2. Name three of the major influences upon Rav S. R. Hirsch's life.
3. Name two of Rav Hirsch's earliest works.
4. According to Rav Hirsch, what is the purpose of life?
5. Describe Rav Hirsch's attitude regarding the nations of the world.

This and much more will be addressed in the eighth lecture of this series:

**"Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch  
and the Creation of a Transformed Orthodoxy".**

To derive maximum benefit from this lecture, keep these questions in mind as you listen to the lecture and read through the outline. Go back to these questions once again at the end of the lecture and see how well you answer them.

PLEASE NOTE: This outline and source book were designed as a powerful tool to help you appreciate and understand the basis of Jewish History. Although the lectures can be listened to without the use of the outline, we advise you to read the outline to enhance your comprehension. Use it, as well, as a handy reference guide and for quick review.

**This lecture is dedicated to the merit and honor of the Zuroff family.**

THE EPIC OF THE ETERNAL PEOPLE  
Presented by Rabbi Shmuel Irons

Series XIX Lecture #8

RABBI SAMSON RAPHAEL HIRSCH  
AND THE CREATION OF A TRANSFORMED ORTHODOXY

I. The First of the Nineteen Letters: The Complaint

A. . . . Every religion, I believe, should bring man nearer to true purpose. This purpose-what else can it be but **the attainment of happiness and perfection**? Yet if we measure Judaism by these criteria, what utterly depressing results we do obtain! To **what sort of happiness does Judaism lead its loyal followers**? From time immemorial, **misery and slavery have been their lot**; they have been misunderstood or despised by the other nations; and while the rest of mankind has ascended to the summit of culture, attaining prosperity and fortune, **the adherents of Judaism have always remained poor in everything** which makes a human being great and noble and which beautifies and dignifies existence. **The Torah law itself forbids every enjoyment; it is a hindrance to all the pleasures of life.** Moreover, for two thousand years we have been tossed around by others, like a plaything, a bouncing ball; and we are, even at this time, banished from all the paths of happiness. As for perfecting our human qualities, what culture, **what conquests in the domain of science, art or invention - in a word, what great achievements- have we wrought in comparison** with the Egyptians, Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Italians, French, English or Germans?

B. Utterly deprived of all characteristics of nationhood, we are nevertheless considered a nation; and every one of us is doomed by his very birth to form an additional link in this chain of misery. The Torah is chiefly at fault in all of this. By its laws that ensure our isolation in life, it arouses, at the very least, suspicion and hostile distrust. By bending our spirit to the point of humble submissiveness, it invites contempt. It blocks the pursuit of the creative arts; through its dogmas it bars the way to free thought and speculation. By imposing a life of isolation, it indeed removes every incentive for exertion in science and art. Therefore they do not flourish among us.

C. As for the study of our religion, it merely distorts the mind and leads it astray into subtleties and the minutiae of petty distinctions, until it becomes incapable of entertaining simple, straightforward opinions. Thus I have always wondered more than a little how you - who knows how to appreciate the beauties of Virgil, Tasso (Cicero) and Shakespeare, and can fathom the logical edifices of Leibnitz and Kant - can find pleasure in the formless, tasteless writings of the Old Testament, or in the illogical disputations of the Talmud. And what is their effect upon one's heart and life? The heart becomes exclusively absorbed in anxious scruples about insignificant trifles. Nothing is taught except to fear G-d. Everything, down to the smallest, pettiest details of life, is referred directly to G-d. Life itself becomes a continuous monastic service, nothing but prayers and ceremonies. The most praiseworthy Jew is the one who lives the most secluded life and knows least of the world, though he permits it to support him; he wastes his life in fasting, praying and poring over meaningless writings. . . . Why it is quite impossible to keep these laws, intended for an entirely different age. What limitations in traveling, what embarrassment in our association with gentiles, what difficulties in every business activity! . . .

**Letter 1**

## II. The Second Letter: The Initial Reply

A. . . . As you know, the subjects you mentioned have occupied my mind since youth. You know, too, that I was educated by enlightened religiously observant parents; that, having been inspired by the writings of the *Tanach* (the Hebrew Bible) at an early age, my maturing intellect led me, of my own free desire, to the study of Gemara (Talmud); and that I did not select the Rabbinical vocation because of practical consideration but solely to follow my inner life-plan.

B. . . . I might ask: Is it so sure that happiness and perfection are the purpose for which man was created? I might ask: What is your basis for this opinion? I might ask: What would you answer the libertine, the criminal, to whom intoxication and momentary gratification of the senses outweigh, every other happiness, temporal or eternal? Is not every individual entitled to decide his own standard of happiness? After all, if happiness has to conform to an externally imposed formula, it can no longer be called happiness! And self perfection, ascent to the highest intellectual summits? How few ever attain it! How few can attain it! And truth itself? It is conceived by a thousand thinkers in a thousand different ways. Moreover, ultimately the failure to pursue the truth is a sin only against oneself, for which man owes an accounting only (other than) to himself. Indeed, to whom else could I be accountable if promotion of the happiness and perfection of my fellow beings is demanded of me only as a means of attaining my own happiness and perfection and I am prepared to forgo these?

C. But I shall omit all these questions. Let us put aside the yardstick with which to measure and first obtain an idea of the object that we wish to measure: Judaism, as it appears in its history and teachings. In the process of studying Judaism, perhaps our thinking about the purpose of man will undergo change and we may arrive at a different criterion for the existence and purpose of nations. But we must first acquaint ourselves with Judaism through the source which it, itself, offers, the only documentation and evidence about itself that it has salvaged from the wreck of all its other fortunes: the Torah. . . . We will read it as Torah - literally, "instruction" - directing and guiding us within G-d's world and among humanity, making our inner self come alive. . . . Let us raise in our soul the basic question of life: The world around me - what is it to me? What am I and what should I be in relation to it? What should I be as man and Israelite? We must read with such a questing spirit - and we shall receive the answer, as Jews, from the mouth of Him Who alone is able to give it. **Letter 2**

## III. The Third Letter: G-d and the World

A. The Torah summons us to view heaven and earth and says to us: from heaven and earth, from earth to heaven, whatever you see in existence came to be when **בראשית ברא אלקים** - at its beginning, G-d as Creator brought it into being. See the heavens in their everlasting tranquil, unchanging course - the source of light, heat and every motive force on our planet, the carrier of our earthly life. Look at the sky at night, with its millions of galaxies, or in daytime, illuminated by the glorious radiance of the sun. Or observe the earth, that swift runner, with its eternal cycles of coming into being and ceasing to be, of blooming and withering, of life and death; decay, decline and death forever struggle to reemerge into new existence, new blossoming and life. See the millions of species, rocks, plants and animals which the earth produces and nourishes, and takes back again into its bosom. See the light, heaven's messenger to the earth, coaxing all into life and then making it fade away again . . . See the oceans encompassing the earth with their all-embracing floods, and the springs welling up from rock fissures and flowing forth into rivulets, brooks and mighty rivers.

B. Gales and lightning, rain and snow, the worm crawling at your feet, the grasses waving in your path, the thunder that rolls majestically and the slight refreshing breeze - all are His servants. . . . Servants all of them, surrounding G-d's throne. . . . He created an abundance of forces, intermingled and functioning closely together, according to His Word - and then He separated them, so that each had to sustain the other: none was henceforth able to exist and function by itself, but had to be sustained by fellow creatures and, in turn, had to help them exist and function. In this way everything contributes according to its strength, however much or little, to the existence of the whole; and if it destroys a fellow creature, it robs itself of what it needs for its existence.

C. . . . Everything receives strength and resources not for itself as such but merely in order to give, and thereby to attain fulfillment of the purpose of its existence. . . . Love, sustained and sustaining, characterizes the Creation of the earth. Everything in it whispers to you: "Love."

### Letter 3

#### IV. Man and His Purpose

A. Is not man, too, a Divine creation? Should he not also be enlisted in His service? Your body - every fiber was formed by Him, arranged by Him, endowed by Him with strength. Your mind, a veritable universe of forces - is G-d's creation in every detail. Your personality - this Divine spark, invisible like G-d, weaving and working in this little universe, controlling body and mind, and possessing the power to make use of the entire world for its purposes - is itself an emanation of De-ity.

B. Is it conceivable that everything is to be of service in the world, of service to G-d, and only man is to be self serving throughout? No, surely not. Your own inner awareness tells you, and the Torah states, that man's purpose is be *tzelem Elokim* - a likeness of G-d. You are to be more than anything else; you are to exist for everything else. You can know G-d only through His acts of love and justice; and, in turn, you too are called upon to act with justice and love, not merely to indulge or endure. Everything bestowed upon you - mind, body, fellowman, material goods, other creatures, every talent and every power - all are merely means to action, *לעבדה ולשמרה*, to further and safeguard everything. With love and with justice! The earth was not created as a gift to you - you have been given to the earth, to treat it with respectful consideration, as G-d's earth, and everything on it as G-d's creation . . .

C. The law to which all forces submit instinctively and involuntarily - to this law you, too, are to subordinate yourself, but consciously and of your own free will. Consciously and freely! This is man's eminent vocation, his highest privilege. . . . Thus to be first and preeminent in this legion of G-d's servants. Our purpose in life, therefore, is not the acquisition of possessions; we should not measure our achievement in life by the volume of outer or inner treasures that we accumulate. Our life's mission is concerned with what we become, what we make of ourselves, and what we give, not what we get. We should measure our attainments by the extent to which we fulfill G-d's Will with the help of our outer and inner acquisitions, utilizing every single one, small or large, for truly human deeds of Divine service. . . . Thus happiness and perfection consist of using all one's outer and inner possessions in fullest measure according to G-d's will - which alone is what makes man great.

D. This comprehended, the purpose of man can be attained by anyone, at any time, with his individual measure of strength and means. Whoever, in his lifetime, fulfilled the Will of G-d toward the creatures brought into his orbit, wronging none, assisting each one to the best of his ability to reach the goal that G-d intended for it - he was truly a man; he expressed justice and love in his life. . . . Thus man, in his earthly form, belongs to this world, and his earthly existence is full of significance. . . . We must properly understand this Will, however, for therein lies the unique greatness of man: whereas the voice of G-d speaks *in* or *through* all other creatures, in the case of man it speaks *to* him, challenging him to accept it, voluntarily, as the impelling force directing his work in life. **Letter 4**

#### V. Humanity and the Mission of Israel

A. . . . Undisputably man requires revelation of the Divine Will, whether from outside or from within himself, or in both ways. . . . Guided by the Torah, we have discovered the position of man within Creation. He is to be neither god nor slave of this earthly world but a brother and fellow worker. However, because of the nature and scope of his service, he holds the rank of the firstborn; he is to be the administrator of the earth, and it is his task to attend to everything on it and further it in accordance with G-d's will. . . . Good for man, should therefore be only that which corresponds to G-d's will and to the intent for which He created things; and "evil" only that which conflicts with His Will. . . . Self indulgence, self gratification, self aggrandizement and following the whims of one's heart are not man's purpose in life. His task is, rather, to ennoble everything, including his urges and physical needs by putting them to the service of G-d's Will, seeing them only as the means of the fulfillment of his mission. . . . Scripture does not record the revelation to man of G-d's Will for mankind as a whole, because such a revelation took place later in a new form, for one particular nation; everything that happened earlier only served to lead up to this event. . . . **Letter 5**

B. Ever since that time, nation after nation has entered upon the stage of history. Each brings with it new energies and new components of the human spirit, pitting both against the forces of nature - and of other nations - in order to amass possessions and enjoyments and to perpetuate its attainments for eternity. But a higher hand - that hand which controls the circumstances under which each nation labors - with a motion that is hardly perceptible topples all that was meant to last forever and, instead, before the eyes of an astounded mankind, causes the greatest happenings to develop from the most insignificant, unnoticed trifles. Thus, when a nation has finally reached the heights of materialism and luxury, it crashes down in ruin, despite its greatness, and indeed through it, making way for a new generation to make the same attempt. . . . Then, in the face of the havoc wrought by human violence and human folly, the futility of all these idolatries will become horrifyingly obvious. The eye, now unobstructed, will once more be lifted to the One Alone, and there will again be an awareness of man's true greatness, which conceives of material goods and pleasures only as a means to an end. Then, as the scattered family of man becomes reunited, by special effort, this awareness, this experience, will pervade the earth from end to end. . . . **Letter 6**

C. . . . Therefore, there would be introduced into the ranks of the nations one people which would demonstrate by its history and way of life that the sole foundation of life is G-d alone; that life's purpose is the fulfillment of his Will; and the formal expression of this Will, specifically addressed to this people, serves as the exclusive bond of its unity. This objective required a nation that was poor in everything upon which the rest of mankind builds its greatness and the entire structure of its life. To all appearances being at the mercy of nations armed with

self-reliant might, it was to be directly sustained by G-d Himself, so that, in manifestly overcoming all opposing forces, G-d would stand revealed as the sole Creator, Judge and Master of history and nature. . . . For the sake of this mission, however, Yisrael could not join in the doings of the rest of the nations, in order not to sink down with them to the worship of material possessions and pleasure. It has to remain separate until the day on which all mankind will have absorbed the lessons of its experiences and the example of this nation and will united turn towards G-d. . . . Then, the “teachings of His Law will go forth from Zion and the Word of G-d from Jerusalem.” **Letter 7**

D. The crucible of suffering in which Yisrael was to be forged in order to fulfill its future mission was Egypt, the country which then enjoyed the highest standard of civilization and which considered its land and its river to be its gods. . . . From the hands of G-d it obtained its freedom and nationhood, and goal of its liberation, the revelation of how He wants men to live - the Torah. . . . Yisrael was given Torah in the wilderness, and there - without a country and land of its own - it became a nation, a body whose soul was Torah. Thereby, it came to be a *mamleches kohanim*, a “kingdom of priests,” a nation serving as the guardian of G-d’s Word in the midst of humanity, as a priest serves amidst his people. . . . Nonetheless, this people was to enter history as a nation in the midst of other nations, to show them that G-d is the Master and Provider of all blessings . . . Accordingly, they all were granted to Yisrael on one - and only one - condition: that it would indeed fulfill the Torah. . . . **Letter 8**

E. . . . The collapse of the state, then, served in its way to educate Yisrael just as much as its former prosperity had done; and its dispersion opened a new, great, and far flung field in which to carry out its mission. . . . Indeed, in exile Yisrael accomplished its task better than during prosperity. *Galus* was meant, first and foremost, to perfect Yisrael. . . . The spirit and fulfillment of the Torah, the only treasure it had rescued, supported it and enabled it to live amidst suffering and agony, ruin and the blows of unrestrained, savage fanaticism. . . . On every page of history, Yisrael has inscribed with its lifeblood that it venerates and loves only One G-d and that there are human values more sublime than possessions and the gratification of one’s desires. . . . **Letter 9**

## VI. The Torah and its Commandments

A. I shall give you only basic outlines, general views of the various sections of the Law, while reserving for the future both the needed elaborations and the explanations of the reasons for them . . . **Letter 10**

B. TOROS: historically revealed concepts about G-d, the character of man and of Yisrael and their implications - not as maxims of faith or philosophy but as actual principles of living, to be acknowledged and absorbed by the heart and soul. **Letter 10**

- that G-d is *your* G-d i.e. the guide of your thoughts, feelings, words and deeds, the mainspring of your whole life. - that He is One, which challenges you to give thought to every aspect of your life and to unite all of your faculties . . . for the purposes of the One from Whom they all derive. - that all His creatures are His servants, and you, too, must join their ranks to labor in His service. - that His Will was revealed to you for this purpose . . . - that the insight gained into G-d’s greatness should lead you to fear of G-d; the perception of His kindness, to love your G-d; and the recognition of His faithfulness, to trust in G-d. . . . **Letter 11**

C. MISHPATIM: expressions of justice towards beings equal to yourself, based on the principle of this equality; i.e., justice towards humans. **Letter 10**

. . . Respect every human being as your equal. Respect him, in inner self as well as his outer garment - his body - and his life. Respect his property, too, as a legal extension of his body. Respect his claim to property or services that you have to render to him, properly measured or counted, as well as his claim to compensation for harm done to his body or property. . . . - Never abuse the frailty of his body, mind, or heart, and never misuse your legal power over him. **Letter 11**

D. CHUKKIM: expressions of justice towards subordinate beings, based on the principle that all things exist in G-d's service; i.e., justice towards the earth and plants and animals, as well as towards your property, your body and your mind and heart, which together make up your self. **Letter 10**

- respect for all that exists, as G-d's property; do not destroy anything! do not misuse it! do not waste! use everything wisely!

- respect for all species: their order was established by G-d - do not intermingle them; respect for all creatures: . . . respect for the feelings and instincts of animals; respect for the human body, even after the soul has departed; . . . - respect for your soul, when you nourish its tool, the body; supply the body only with such nourishment that will enable it to act as a pure and willing messenger of the world to the spirit . . . lastly respect for your own person in its purest expression - your power of speech. **Letter 11**

E. MITZVOS: precepts of love towards all beings, even when they have no claim to it, purely because of G-d's bidding and the meaning of your mission as man and Yisraelite. **L. 10**

- revering your parents, . . . - revering wisdom, age and virtue; . . . seek enlightenment through Torah's wise teachings about life - fleeing from evil and attaching yourself to good . . . - constantly endeavoring to perfect your inner self . . . - to save a person's life, property or happiness - to help suffering animals - . . . you must preserve the Torah . . . your example will enlighten and inspire your brethren within the people of Yisrael and, above all, your non-Jewish brethren, and will teach them to venerate and love the One and Only G-d and their G-d too . . . in other words, you, in your limited circle, as an individual, can fulfill the very task that, on a larger scale, constitutes the mission of your entire nation. **Letter 12**

F. EDOS: precepts that, by word or symbolic action, serve for the individual, for Yisrael and for the world beyond as reminders of all the truths that form the basis of the mission of man and Yisraelite. **Letter 10**

The idea that G-d is the Creator and Guardian of Yisrael's national body and national spirit is expressed by Pesach, Shavu'os, Sukkos, and Shemini Atzeres; and that He is Yisrael's Guardian in exile, too, is expressed by Chanukah and Purim. . . . - Sanctification of the body and warning against animal-like behavior are expressed by *milah* (circumcision). - The lesson taught by tephillin (phylacteries) is that we should rally all the powers of our mind, heart and body in the service of the One Alone. . . . When such concepts are put into words, they are fragmented and lose their wholeness. Instead, we are to express each idea through symbolic action which reflects the complete thought as a whole . . . Do you not see that in every moment in which you refrain from doing *melachah* on Shabbos you attest to the fact that G-d is the sole Creator and L-rd, and you remind yourself that you are His servant? . . . The same approach applies to all the ordinances in the category of EDOS, . . . **Letter 13**

AVODAH: exaltation and sanctification of our inner, spiritual life - to help us accomplish our mission in the world - by refining our thinking through word and symbolic action. **Letter 10**

As for us, the Beis ha-Mikdash has sunk in ruins, but the spoken word remains, and, indeed, in a more comprehensive form, since now it also has to take the place of the symbolic actions themselves. The purpose of words of prayer, *tephilah*, is *lehisparallel*; purification, illumination, uplifting our inner self towards recognition of the truth - not an emotional, fleeting devotion, a momentary ecstasy, a flood of tears, but a *cleansing of the thoughts and of the heart*. Life robs us of accurate discernment of G-d, the world, mankind, and Yisrael, and of our own relationship to them. . . . **Letter 14**

#### VII. Torah and Derech Eretz

A. However, Judaism has no regard for the kind of speculation that does not aspire to contribute to active, productive life. . . . To be sure, of late the Jewish way of thinking has predominantly been marked by abstruse musing; wide awake observation of the world has been lacking. The goal of study has not been practical life, to understand the world and our duty in it; scholarship has become an end in itself, rather than a means to an end, and only few have borne in mind its true objective. The teachings of Judaism have been studied, but people have forgotten to seek the basic meaning of Judaism in the Tanach. This, however, is not the genuine way of Judaism; our great masters have always opposed it, and the example of our forefathers speaks against it. **Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch, The Nineteen Letters, Letter 15**

B.

מה נמצא נחת רוח ליוצרנו ב"ה בכל הפלפולים הגדולים והפסקים הרבים? ואין א' מתחזק לעמוד בסוד ד' ולגלות אור כבודו אל השכינה. . . . הרב משה חיים לוצאטו, אגרת לרבו הרה"ג ר' ישעיה באסאן

. . . What pleasure does our Creator, may He be blessed, have from all of the great *pilpulim* (complex logical analyses) and the many legal decisions? None of them makes the effort to understand G-d's secrets and to reveal the light of His glory unto the Shechina. . . . **Letter from R. Moshe Luzzatto to R. Yeshaya Bassan, Padua Adar 19, 5492 (1732)**

C. In Israel there is now, and has always been, one national endeavor, and this is Talmud Torah. . . . This nation is occupied with discoveries and inventions in only one field, and that field is Torah! To preserve and to disseminate the teachings of the Torah, to comprehend and to communicate the eternal truths drawn from the Torah, to "study and to teach," to draw upon the timeless sources of Torah for a proper assessment of the problems posed by every age, to delve into the precepts of this Torah and into the spirit of its institutions with ever growing clarity and thoroughness, to make every age and every generation increasingly aware of these concepts - that is the national endeavor of Judaism for thousands of years. **Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch, Collected Writings VI pp. 36-37**

D. The teachings of the Torah are to form the real subjects of our mental occupation. We are not to cultivate them as a side issue, nor from the standpoint or for the standpoint of other scientific study, and equally, indeed, take care not to introduce into the sphere of Torah-studies foreign matter and ideas which have grown on the soil of other scientific hypotheses. We are altogether always to bear in mind the specific higher level of our knowledge which differs from all other scientific knowledge through its Divine origin, and not place it on the same level as the other sciences, as if it, too, rested on the basis of human knowledge. **Commentary to Deuteronomy 6:7**



E. Israel's approach to acquiring knowledge, what men called "science," is at total variance with that of the nations. The other nations try to find solutions to their problems by way of a freely, creative *search* through the contemplation of nature and history. Israel, on the other hand, endeavors to penetrate into the significance and development of all interrelationships of the world and humanity, in the light of the revealed truths, the truth from Sinai. **Collected Writings IV p. 373**

F. Yisrael's entire being rests upon Torah. Torah is its basis, its goal, its lifeblood. If our relationship to Torah is sound, Yisrael can suffer no ills; if it is ailing, Yisrael cannot be well. Any wrong development in Yisrael owe their rise, or at least perpetuation, to a faulty understanding of Torah. . . . Thus Judaism must be studied and understood in of itself and be elevated, all by itself, to a science of well living. **Letter 18**

### VIII. Reform

But "reform", to us, spells this and this alone: the implementation of Judaism by Jews in our time, realization of the eternal ideal within the setting of our particular age and through use of the specific circumstances that it provides. This means that we have to educate and elevate our generation towards heights of the Torah, but not lower the Torah to the level of the times and reduce its lofty peaks to the shallowness of our life. It is we Jews who need reform, through renewed attention to Judaism, intellectually comprehended and vigorously implemented; that eternal Law itself, set up as a model for all times by the G-d of all ages, does not need reform, as advocated by the children of our time who merely desire an easier life. The Torah means to elevate us to its heights; and we - should we drag it down to our level? See the damage that the age has caused us: ignorance and misconception of Judaism and, in addition to this, the tendency, penetrating our modest habitations from the outside world, to find in the pursuit of pleasure the aim of life. Ignorance! Where can you find the Jew who knows himself, who is aware of the content and meaning of his destiny and mission? Where are the sons of Yisrael in whose hearts echo the sounds of David's harp and the words of the prophets, and whose minds at least comprehend the full scope of Yisrael's duty, even if not its spirit? And, worst of all, the misconceptions! The outward rites of Judaism may still be familiar, but how little is known of their inner meaning! . . . That is where we are deficient - in inner depth, in proper comprehension of the destiny and the teachings of Judaism and, hence, in love for it. . . . Now compare this aim to today's attempts at reform. Do not be angry with anyone - respect all of them, for they sense a shortcoming; they desire the good as they conceive it; they have the best intentions for the welfare of their brethren. . . . Therefore, respect their intention; but you may well grieve, indeed you may weep, when examining their actual endeavors. Is this the reform we are in need of - to adapt a viewpoint alien to Judaism, to take from foreign sources some thesis about the purpose of man or the meaning of emancipation and to whittle down and reduce the fullness of Judaism to correspond to these ideas? Is this the reform we need - to remain within the framework of Judaism, but an uncomprehended Judaism, and merely to revise the outward forms of one misunderstood part of it, the Divine Service, and remodel it according to the sentimentalities of the age? We can see it everywhere; uncomprehended practices are being jettisoned, and others, equally uncomprehended, are being kept on, but very little is done out of any real, deeper understanding. **Letter 17**