

PURIM POEM

Most of us at JTS.
Hew to the party line,
A line as straight and inveterate
As Simon Greenberg's spine.

For we, the Jews of JTS,
Know God dwells here although,
When asked to enter Gillman's class,
God Shuddered, shook, and thundered "NO!"

When pressed to answer why, The Lord
With customary pomp and pith
Said "The Lord haveth not his habitation
In a room where He's a myth."

I asked the Lord where would He go,
And what would He now do?
He sighed and said, "Perhaps I'll stay:
Its better than Y.U.

"When I go there," the Lord complained,
"It's always a mistake;
They insist I admit Shechter was a misfit,
And his disciples--Amalek."

"So why not go," I humbly said,
"To visit HUC?
They may not recognize you, but
They'll treat you graciously."

"I can't," said God, His face forlorn
And his z'roah n'tuyah,
"The only command they think I have
Concerns Nicaragua.

"Besides," He said, "when I go there
I feel so indiscrete;
It's uncomfortable to stay where there
Is nothing one can eat."

"The RRC?" I said, to which
God gave a clipped reply:
"I do not enter places where
I'm a piece of a huge pie."

"The Holy Land would seem to be
The one place left to you.
Betake yourself to there," I urged,
"Surely Jerusalem will do."

"Jerusalem?" Said God with scorn
"The city of Sharon?
Where Goren saves and Kahane raves?
Why, I'd sooner go to Rome.

"I can't go to the Holy Land
Even if I wanted to;
They say I do not qualify
Under laws of who's a Jew."

Visibly distraught was God,
The blood drained from His face;
He seemed not to notice, or not to mind
Anthropomorphising all over the place.

"Look God" said I, "I know it is
presumptuous for me to say
But if you find ten decent sorts at JTS,
Could you be persuaded then to stay?"

The Lord pondered, counted, then He said
His sadness mixed with glee,
"From faculty, staff and students,
I can't think of more than three."
(He told me who they were but I
Am sworn to secrecy.)

"And yet" God said, "I think I'll stay
And fashion here some folk
Who won't think of cholesterol
When I say the Mitvah's yoke;

"For then I'll know that I have had
Some measure of success;
Even here, my temporal home
--The halls of JTS."

Then God stepped away in glory
In a sapphire smoke cascade,
But I know He still stays with us,
For I've received financial aid;
And that, my friends, is the truest proof
That this world the good God made.

CONSERVATIVE THEOLOGY

We believe in God, but He
Works His wonders gradually;
For millenia He tried to hide
The existence of a distaff side;
But now the secret's out, and He
Is She; or, Kaplanitely, We.

(To some this seems an awful mess,
But to those of us at JTS,
It's 'terminological largesse.')

This God once chose (or didn't choose)
A tribe we designate as 'Jews.'
And encumbered them with strict taboos,
Including synagogal dues.
(This last part Wissenschaft disproves.)

So how is one to understand
This God who did not speak to man?
Two schools of thought have come to light.
--Both are, of course, completely right.
We pluralists refuse to fight.

One school says God did not inscribe
Commandments to His human tribe.
The essence of His revelation
Was entering into relation;
And this, in human derivation,
Explains that bit about procreation.

Accordingly, they think that 'He'
means 'to be', eternally.
And Godhood, in the being biz
Partakes of the eternal IS
Negating all derivatives
And affirming that the Oneness lives.
Get this down -- there'll be a quiz!

School number two thinks number one
Views God as entirely too much fun.
In fact God strung out all mitvot,
Which clan he liked, which tribe He smote
And had Moses learn it all by rote.
But Moses could not transcribe God's will
As he suffered from a "heavy quill."

So how did the Bible get to be?
By teamwork--J, E, P and D.
Some add to this--two J's, two P's,
But that's to do with royalties:
E's heirs, you see, are suing D's;
Concerning breach of theologies.

Then our Rabbis came, and they
Proved Shabbes driving was OK.
We know this from when Moses tried
To learn Torah at Akiba's side.
Moses didn't grasp the point
Which shows our T'shuvot are justified.

Now if you've followed carefully,
You know Conservative choreography;
It's classic/modern, fuzzy/sharp
A sort of Bolshoi done by Twyla Tharp.
If you now wish to progress,
To fill up all that emptiness
With scads and heaps of holiness,
You'll come to learn at JTS,
The Everest of sacredness.
Goodbye. Good luck, and "whatever" bless.
Sincerely,
Well...Why don't you guess...

David Wolpe