

# “Training men and women in dignity, in civic righteousness, and in the responsibilities of American citizenship”: The Thought of Rabbi Abram Simon, 1897–1938

by Marc Lee Raphael

## I

*Simon was the greatest orator that I have ever heard in my life, and one of the greatest extemporaneous speakers of our time.*

Harry Sylvester Wender<sup>1</sup>

Rabbi Abram Simon, president of the Central Conference of American (Reform) Rabbis from 1923 to 1925, and senior rabbi of Washington Hebrew Congregation from 1904 to his death in 1938, built his rabbinate around his public lectures, sermons, and addresses more than anything else. Like so many other Reform rabbis of his generation, he conducted weddings, funerals, and life-cycle events for congregants, taught classes for the sisterhood ladies on various weekdays and for adult members on occasional Sunday mornings and weekday evenings, and even wrote a pamphlet or two on Jewish education. Unlike many colleagues, he spent the bulk of his time preparing the public speeches he delivered at the congregation, at churches, at local halls and schools, and even in national forums. And finding the time was no simple matter, for in addition to the burden of life-cycle events for a growing congregation, he served for many years as president of the District of Columbia Board of Education as well as in numerous other civic and communal positions. But the extant manuscript copies of scores of sermons in the Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives reveal the considerable time he spent crafting and editing his public addresses, searching for the perfect word and phrase, in the rhetorical style of his day, with which to move his audience. His sermons and other talks, rich in poetic phrases and powerful descriptions of the natural world, were clearly meant to be heard, not read, and hence we must remain constantly aware that we can only retrieve the text of an oral message.

Rabbi Simon had many years of schooling to prepare him for this

task, including nine years at the Hebrew Union College (he entered in 1885 at age thirteen) and (concomitantly) four years at the University of Cincinnati, and he took a Ph.D. degree in religion from the George Washington University in the District of Columbia. He read widely in Judaic and general studies, though he was not one of those rabbis (so common between the world wars) who regularly reviewed every best-seller for his congregation. He read mostly in philosophy and religion, though his interest in sociology and contemporary social issues was strong, but if there was one source to which he returned over and over it was the Hebrew Bible. It brought him considerable inspiration and consolation, and it usually provided the text from which his lecture, sermon, or address would spring.

## II

*Who can stand before the giant mountains with their bulk thrown against the sky and with their pyramidal tongues trying to get the first warm kiss of the passionate sun, without a sense of their awe-inspiring majesty, and without looking beyond them to the Power whose creative fingers moulded chaos into cosmic order?*

(Yom Kippur morning, 1937)

Many Progressives dismissed personal God notions, substituted as the highest value man's communion with man (fellowship, loyalty, love), and sanctified community. But Simon affirmed the reality of a personal, creating, revealing God from his earliest sermons in Sacramento in the 1890s to his last address in Washington, D.C., in the late 1930s. He accepted the truth of revelation, asserting over and over that the Jewish religion began in a theophany, that divine revelation was the keystone of his faith, and that God revealed Himself continually. Indeed, Simon wondered why someone would even imagine worshipping a nonrevealing God. "I believe in God," Rabbi Simon would often exclaim, and though he insisted that he could not demonstrate God's existence, and though he realized that his own conception of God had changed over the years of his rabbinate, he felt comfortable affirming that life had its source in God, that God forgave sin, that "God is real to me; he exists; I live by the promises of God," and that "the belief in God was and is the most natural instinct of the human heart."<sup>2</sup>

No less than God and prayer did Simon affirm heaven, by which

he meant the traditional Jewish belief in immortality of the soul and resurrection of the body. It was an equal opportunity heaven that he would describe; God would not distinguish between Jew, Christian, or Moslem, nor would any soul be denied access. The infant, the soldier, the woman who died in pregnancy—all would receive the “Father’s embrace.”<sup>3</sup>

### III

*[The Bible] came like the burning sun clearing away the dense clouds of sin and idolatry, sending at the same time its warm, enlivening rays into the hearts of its lovers.*

(Sacramento, 189?)

Because Rabbi Simon affirmed, without qualification, divine revelation of the Torah, it is not surprising that the Bible was the text he loved and from which he quoted consistently and with ease. From the Bible he developed a sophisticated understanding of religion, always taking care to define what he meant by the word *religion* and to delineate the essential ingredients of his faith. He did this in a philosophical manner in his 1907 dissertation, “The Constructive Character and Function of Religion in Human Progress as Illustrated by the Religion of Israel,” in addresses he delivered to the national association of Reform rabbis before and during his presidency of their organization, and in public lectures and sermons.

In brief, he argued from sociological, historical, psychological, and philosophical perspectives that a religion needed an idea of God, an idea of sin, and an idea of mission, and his faith included a strong endorsement of all three. His affirmation of “mission” was extremely radical for Reform rabbis of his generation and especially for the leader of such an Americanized congregation. He regularly urged a “militant attitude” in support of Jews who spread Judaic teachings and of rabbis who welcomed non-Jews into the Jewish faith. In a 1924 lecture celebrating the 100th anniversary of Cincinnati’s Bene Israel, Rabbi Simon called for a mission to “nominal Christians, to the thousands of wandering, non-observant Christians.” He was “proud of the truth that the Jewish religion was a proselyting [*sic*] religion” and was “sorry, oh so sorry, that for two thousand years we have lost the daring to continue the proselyting [*sic*].”

Indeed, these three characteristics of religion in general were

"most highly developed in Judaism." At least until World War I and the "reddened earth of twenty nations" shattered some of his optimism, Simon spoke repeatedly of religion and human progress, with the optimistic, theological presumptions shared by many Protestants and Jews of his age. Judaism (or what he strangely called "Reformed" Judaism) represented "decided progress and ethical growth," and for the first quarter century or so of his rabbinate he could speak of the "historic development of [the] moral nature of man." But even when he lost faith in the progress of humankind, he never wavered in his conviction that Judaism was "irresistably [*sic*] driven to unity, and to a progressive evaluation of this unity in terms of the highest morally creative Personality."<sup>4</sup>

#### IV

*The progress of science in the past decades is well-nigh dazzling.*

(Ventnor, New Jersey, July 10, 1904)

None of this unshakable faith in a living God compromised Rabbi Simon's genuine enthusiasm for science and its discoveries in the natural world. Theories of Survival of the Fittest and Artificial Selection ("the triumph of man") were woven into his theology ("The fittest have survived; can we not see wherein we are powerful agents and partners with God in this universal plan?"); discoveries about the sun and stars as well as atoms and electric charges were applauded as divinely approved efforts to unlock the "secrets of this wondrous universe." Matter especially interested Simon, but once again he saw no conflict between his theology and his embracing of natural science, for the Jew believes that one may be "legitimately scientific and wholesomely religious at one and the same time." Though matter may have been the "fundamental reality," God, for Simon, was the "Supreme Personality and ultimate reality." Just about anything in the world of science he viewed enthusiastically, for it helped all of us look beyond ourselves to the "Power whose creative fingers moulded chaos into cosmic order." Like so many Progressives, there was a material world to conquer, to spiritualize, and the scientist was God's necessary agent in this Progressive task. Science meant progress, and its achievements would bring about a social utopia. He felt that Judaism "religionized creation," and he would typically express this notion in words such as these that he used once on Rosh Hashanah: "grasping the underlying

Unity of the Cosmos towards which Science has been groping for many centuries, a cause equal to the existence and the perpetuation of the Universe."<sup>5</sup>

V

*Here must habits of cleanliness, sobriety and honesty be drilled.*

(New York, 1914)

Historians of progressivism, the first modern reform upsurge, have continually expanded the constituency of this "movement"<sup>6</sup> from Anglo-Saxon Protestant professionals or the urban middle class to lower-class, urban politicians, social workers, organized labor, settlement house reformers, and clergymen.<sup>7</sup> Although they have been hard pressed to agree about the terminal date of progressivism, they generally place the end of the movement before 1920, when "public enthusiasm that generated much reform in the pre-World War I period flagged."<sup>8</sup> With an exception or two, most of Rabbi Abram Simon's sermons and talks on Progressive themes (minimum wage, scientific management, public welfare, child labor legislation, workmen's compensation, mothers' pensions, pure food) took place during the 1920s, and he helped keep the themes of the movement alive for a decade or so after most others had faded.

The one theme Simon developed at the height of progressivism was his commitment to the public schools (he would later serve as president of the board of education in 1920-21, 1922-23, and 1931-32, and the District of Columbia later named an elementary school, at Fourth and Mississippi SE, Streets in his memory). Numerous reformers, as they watched the effects of rapid industrialization and urbanization in American cities at the turn of the century, called for public school reforms, and Simon echoed many of their concerns. He thought the public school was the city's chief civic asset, the "melting pot" where immigrant and native children could merge into model Americans, and he envisioned a school where youngsters "would readily debate the great problems of the day, or listen eagerly to addresses on hygiene, civic responsibility or filial duty." Most of all, when he spoke about the public schools, he utilized the vocabulary of the Progressive reformers of the early twentieth century: manners, cleanliness of person, regard for health and moderation, citizenship, respect for authority, "chivalrous regard for the sex" (women), the virtue and dignity of labor, and the words *Progress* and *Efficiency* with

upper-case letters. Whenever possible, he sought biblical (rather than Protestant) sources for social action and social justice, using the Prophets to call for urban reform.<sup>9</sup>

He not only lectured and wrote about reforming and revitalizing the public schools but argued that a "rational and righteous response" to a community's "progressive needs" included a public university. Like the public schools, Simon felt that the university, available to every qualified citizen in the community, must "open its windows upon LIFE." Just as he had argued that the public schools should train youngsters for civic appreciation and ethical citizenship, so the university should involve itself with the slum, poverty, crime, social settlements, factory, and shop. The ideal university student, echoing Progressive education reformers, should learn to "know his city." In this manner, the university would be the city's greatest asset.<sup>10</sup>

Before Rabbi Simon had an opportunity to head the board of education and articulate this vision for the larger population of the District of Columbia, he set about attempting to bring a Progressive vision of efficient management and moral education to the Washington Hebrew Congregation Sunday School. He, like so many Progressive reformers, correctly grasped that efficient organization was a prerequisite for more socially conscious citizens. The Sunday school, as the synagogue, ought not to ignore the "upstream and downstream of human life" but should use its moral energy and conscience to affect the world outside the school. In another era, the emphasis would be on Judaic studies, but in the Progressive Era Simon spoke to educators about chivalry, bodily cleanliness ("a healthy body made for a healthy mind"), rebuilding community, and especially honor. He would emphasize honor to the Sunday school teachers and the board of managers; indeed, he tried to "inflame" the children with a passion for honor. And by honor Rabbi Simon usually meant a respect for one's own body (cleanliness) and a respect for other bodies. More than Hebrew, Bible, history, or liturgy, Simon believed, with other urban reformers, that a clean and healthy body would inevitably lead to a strong moral character.<sup>11</sup>

## VI

*God is as near to us in our buying and selling as He is in our preaching and praying.*

(Saint Louis, 1925)

Not only were urban social reform and Protestantism linked in the Progressive Era,<sup>12</sup> but a large social justice movement characterized Reform Judaism in the early twentieth century. The social gospel movement of the late nineteenth century grew to maturity in the Progressive Era. It continued to recruit clergy (ministers and rabbis, especially) and laypersons who tried to bring justice and righteousness to all areas of human activity. Yet Simon and the leaders of the Eighth Street Temple made little effort to encourage the members, as a congregation, to respond to urbanization and try to solve some of the city's problems, for his Progressive vision did not seem to include the sense that an informed congregation could solve some of the urban problems of its age. But the rabbi did constantly challenge the materialism of his increasingly bourgeois members with a sermon or two on the High Holidays, the worship services at which nearly every member of the congregation was present. He especially complained in the 1920s, a decade that he called the "Plastic Age of shallow materialism," that the businessmen of the congregation expected him to "put it over," to "sell Judaism" as they sold goods. Mirroring the Committee on Synagogue and Labor, created by the Central Conference of American Rabbis in 1910, he regularly asked his congregants if they were making efforts in their own lives to champion a decent wage for workers, restrictions on hiring children, government inspection of meat, unemployment and disability insurance for workers, and ethical transactions in the marketplace. In fact, the "most resplendent ethical triumph of the century," he concluded, was the growing awareness in the world of commerce that there was an ethical Magna Charta. He conveyed a strong sense, over several decades of preaching to merchants, that the heart of the religious message was to buy and sell with the highest ethical standard possible.<sup>13</sup>

## VII

*The city of Washington is our Zion, as dear to God as was Jerusalem; can it not become the City of God?*

(Washington, D.C., 1925)

For more than half a century after Theodor Herzl founded the Zionist movement at the end of the 1890s, Washington Hebrew Congregation would present a non-Zionist (and later, a militant non-Zionist) face to the community. Convinced that a commitment to

a Jewish state in Palestine compromised integration into American society by "degrading the true Jewish patriotism," the congregation's rabbinic and lay leaders would make sure, at least until the 1950s, that nobody confused the congregation with support for a future Jewish national home or even, at first, for the new state of Israel. No Jewish (Israeli) flag would ever grace the pulpit, though Rabbi Simon frequently stated that the congregation "wrapped the folds of our American flag around the mantle of our sacred Scroll." He was as committed to Americanism as to Judaism ("twin children of our consciousness") and was determined not only to give Judaism and Americanism equal affection but to make sure he conveyed his distaste for Zionism. In 1915, in response to a Zionist lecture in Washington by Louis D. Brandeis the previous week, Simon told his congregation that "whichever side is triumphant in the war, the lot of the Jew will be better in Europe, and talk of his persecution will be a thing of the past." So, in the United States as in Europe, a "Zionist-American-Jew is a double-hyphenated American," and "any Jew who so considers himself ought to rid his country of his presence." This, for Simon, was the major threat Zionism posed for his congregants. Seemingly proud and happy in their American citizenship, they imagined that an affirmation of Zionism would compromise their American citizenship by opening them to charges of dual loyalty.

But in the strange manner of many other Reform rabbis, while he detested Zionism and told his members that "America is our Zion," he did love the "other" Zion, or at least he felt kindly toward the Jewish community of Palestine. He could insist that the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 A.D. was a blessing, not a curse, because Judaism has flourished outside Palestine and needs neither Jerusalem nor Zion. But he applauded the Jewish "redemptive rehabilitation" of Palestine from time to time, calling the pioneers a "great civilization," opposing British restrictions on Jewish immigration to Palestine and telling the settlers how much he admired them. At the same time, he could insist that he did not agree with their vision of Jewish nationalism, for their passion for a Jewish state threatened Jewish integration in America and made their living together with the Arabs much more difficult, if not impossible. Not that Rabbi Simon did not harbor his own nationalism. He was no less a chauvinist and nationalist than the Jews of Palestine. He regularly lauded

American hegemony and power, giving gratitude and thanks over and over for his great fortune in living in the greatest country in the world. Not only was Washington (not alone America) Zion, but in 1925 and again in 1937, in Washington, he repeated the claim that "God is in this place and in this country."<sup>14</sup>

### VIII

*Orthodox and Conservative Jews have developed excellent institutions and a fine quality of leadership.*

(Washington, D.C., 1927)

Much of Simon's ministry was devoted to ecumenical talks, whether to Christian groups (he made numerous alliances with Christian leaders) or in support of "Jewish ecumenism." When addressing the former, he tried his best to help Judaism gain acceptance as one of the three major faiths in the civic arena, disguising the fact that Jews were a tiny percentage of the total population and arguing that they deserved "one-third" representation in the civic arena. In the late 1920s he was deeply involved in the Threefold movement, where representatives of (seemingly) every major faith attended gatherings (often hosted by Rabbi Simon at the Eighth Street Temple) that paid tribute (in song, poetry, liturgy, and talks) to the founders of these faiths. Simon felt strongly that such events would "demystify Judaism" and help eliminate "religious prejudice." From time to time, in addition, he delivered powerful and intellectually sophisticated sermons on the Christian origins of anti-Semitism, as well as the Christian influence on the development of racism, and regularly protested the Christian claim that a New Dispensation had replaced the Old Dispensation. He presented Judaism to Christians as a respectable religion deeply concerned with the city in which the synagogue stood.

He was equally well advanced over most of his colleagues in his Jewish ecumenism. He was frequently critical of Reform Judaism, particularly of its tendency to "spread a lot of platitudes" and to "become synonymous with a cold intellectualism and with a stereotyped rationalism." He spoke intelligently about Conservative and Orthodox Judaism and was eager to cooperate with their followers wherever possible. He was in the lead in organizing all three religious branches of Judaism into one organization, the Synagogue Council of America; early in 1925, in an address to the Union of American Hebrew

Congregations, the national organization of Reform congregations, he called for a union of the three groups. In an address to the National Jewish Congregational and Rabbinical Organizations a few months later, he claimed "there is only one Judaism," despite the varieties, and that an organization of Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox congregations (he underestimated the total when he used the figure 750) would have great clout. He repeated this theme in his presidential address to the CCAR that year and again spoke with respect and appreciation for the contributions of his Orthodox and Conservative colleagues and their congregations. It came as no surprise that Orthodox colleagues in Washington would memorialize Rabbi Simon with considerable affection.<sup>15</sup>

## IX

*Unregulated immigration is vexing and vicious.*

(Washington, D.C., 1912)

Rabbi Simon was a conspicuous participant in the Americanization movement. At first, he wished that the Russian Jews would "remain where they are, face the problem, and overcome it," but by the early years of the twentieth century he realized that Italians and Jews, "America's most serious and perplexing problem," would not remain in Europe but would continue to come in enormous numbers year after year. Then, like so many Progressives, he championed an intensive program to acculturate the millions of immigrants, to make them more like "old American stock." But his vision of remaking the Russian Jews was not in the image of older Americans but that of the German-Jewish bourgeois elite, that is, leaders of Washington Hebrew Congregation. They could not all be "remade," and the first step was to support the "regulation of immigration," not stopping it completely but by enacting legislation that would control the "excess." The leading journal of Progressive opinion, the *New Republic*, used the same language as early as 1916 when it warned that the United States could not permit "social ills to be aggravated by excessive immigration."<sup>16</sup> In this, Rabbi Simon was not alone, as numerous Progressives, yielding to the racist hysteria accompanying the war, accepted the passage of the first immigration bill (February 1917) requiring a literacy test. John Higham has noted how "Teddy Roosevelt best rode the [antihyphenate] movement; Woodrow Wilson surrendered to it, and

together they illustrated the change that the progressive impulse was undergoing."<sup>17</sup> Simon's Americanization program would seek to teach the immigrants American literature and American politics, so they would be "loyal, healthy, useful, productive Americans." And the congregation's women were doing exactly that through the Council of Jewish Women, the United Hebrew Charities, and the various settlement house programs with which they were involved.<sup>18</sup>

X

*Women are entering the political, industrial and civil world; then why exclude them from the ministry if they desire to enter it?*

(Washington, D.C., 1920)

It is not easy to separate the views of Rabbi Simon on women from those of his wife, Carrie Oberdorfer Simon (1872–1961). She was a bright, aggressive, talented, ambitious woman whose causes would have rankled many men and women even if she had been pleasing rather than abrasive. Her strident independence and even par-rabbinic demeanor grated on numerous members of the congregation's board who felt the rabbi's wife should be frequently seen but rarely heard. Many current synagogue members recall their mothers' pride, and jealousy, over Carrie's achievements. A contemporary of Carrie later noted her "cruel" and biting wit, which she often used to ridicule and belittle people.<sup>19</sup>

She had founded the national sisterhood movement in Cincinnati in January 1913 with 52 sisterhoods, and as the first president of the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods<sup>20</sup> she was constantly on the lecture circuit in the years after 1913. By the end of 1914 there were already 100 sisterhoods with 15,000 members.<sup>21</sup> In her role as national president of the Reform sisterhoods for six years after she founded the organization, Carrie frequently spoke from the pulpits of Reform congregations throughout the country.

When the NFTS pushed the Union of American Hebrew Congregations to urge congregations to include a woman among their leaders, Carrie was there to make sure the Eighth Street Temple placed her, sisterhood president and rabbi's wife, on the congregation's board. No doubt some members of the board felt compromised; the rabbi was not invited to board meetings, but his wife became an automatic member in 1923! By later standards, her feminism was moder-

ate if not mild, but no doubt the conservative leadership of the congregation felt threatened by her, and many simply disliked her. It is no longer possible to separate the professional from the personal in this area.

In point of fact, those who listened to her speeches ought to have been calmed by much of her message, and it is possible that the rabbi held views of his own more liberal than those of his wife. She told women that their place was in the home; they should not "abdicate" the "throne," for "within our domestic kingdoms, we are queens." She urged women "to rejoice in the privileges of wifehood," and she told them to reject "feminism" and affirm "womanliness." She did also insist that women must do more in the synagogue than "collect money, supply altar clothes, or brush up the handles of the big front door," but the areas she usually proposed were hardly threatening: encourage worship attendance, interest the children in religious school, develop congregational hospitality, and encourage more congregational singing.<sup>22</sup>

Perhaps it was the part of her speeches in which she urged not only that women, with "religious fervor," serve as "Para-rabbis" (compare this point with Rabbi Simon's strong hope that women would become rabbis) assisting the rabbi in ministering to "minds that are unhappy and to people that are seeking the comfort of God," or her proposals that "girls view the Jewish ministry as a legitimate field for the operation of their distinctive talents and abilities," that seemed threatening. Perhaps it was just her presence, jealousy of sisterhood women, and especially the sense among some male leaders that powerful women such as Mrs. Abram Simon threatened their exclusive male control of the synagogue.<sup>23</sup>

Rabbi Simon's attitudes toward women were ambivalent. He was a strong advocate of legalizing birth control, although he felt it was exclusively the responsibility of the woman. He detested almost anything that challenged bourgeois sex standards, such as "Companionate" marriages<sup>24</sup> yet he supported the efforts of some women's groups to enact "no-fault" divorce legislation. For the most part, he excoriated his generation's "flabby morality," blaming it (rather superficially) on coeducation, cheap novels, jazz, "bedroom farces," and the "sensation" press. He was a strong supporter of woman suffrage, of women's social and political equality, and of the right of Jewish women to become rabbis, on the grounds that all people

should be able to achieve their fullest human potential, but he also rejected the suggestion that women should be allowed in the Masons and argued that the primary responsibility for home and children rested on them. A conservative, Republican man of his time, he nevertheless could break out of his generation's thinking and articulate some ideas that were not widely held until well after he passed from the scene.<sup>25</sup> He argued for legalized birth control, expanded rights for women (including rabbinical ordination), rigorous business ethics, active programs to reach out to potential converts, and—with typical Progressive vocabulary—dedication to exercise and nutrition. Most of all, he had a vision of *achdut*, Jewish unity. He called for dialogue among interdenominational rabbinic leadership with the hope that such dialogue would transcend ideological barriers for the sake of the common good of the Jewish people.

---

*Marc Lee Raphael is Professor of Religion at the College of William and Mary.*

## NOTES

1. The epigraph quotation is from an interview with Harry Sylvester Wender (1908–85), Jewish Historical Society of Greater Washington Oral History Project, September 30, 1980.

2. "The Bible: An Address by Rabbi Abram Simon," Sacramento, California, 189[?]; "The Revelation Under the Oaks," Commemoration of Fortieth Anniversary of the Ministry of Rev. Dr. David Philipson, Rockdale Avenue Temple, Cincinnati, November 3, 1928; "Why I Am a Jew," *Religion Forum*, November 18, 1930; "The Miracle of Forgiveness," Yom Kippur afternoon, 193[5?]; "What Ought We to Believe?" (n.d.). All of Rabbi Simon's sermons, lectures, and talks (except those that have been published) are in the Abram and Carrie Simon Collection, Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio (hereafter cited as AJA).

3. "A New Heaven and a New Earth: A Sunday Lecture," Rodef Shalom Congregation, Pittsburgh, January 6, 1918.

4. "The Constructive Character and Function of Religion in Human Progress as illustrated by the Religion of Israel," Ph.D. diss., George Washington University, 1907; "Shall We Seek Converts?" (n.d.); "The Spiritual Challenge of the Age," conference lecture, Central Conference of American Rabbis, *Central Conference of American Rabbis Yearbook* 28 (1918): 188–99 (hereafter cited as CCARY); "American Judaism in the Making," 100th Anniversary of Cincinnati's Bene Israel, January 18, 1924. Simon read widely in contemporary ethics, as well as the philosophy of religion, and was much influenced by it, especially Josiah Royce. A good example would be Josiah Royce, *Studies of Good and Evil: A Series of Essays upon Problems of Philosophy and Life* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1898). See also Egal Feldman, "The Social Gospel and the Jews," *American Jewish Historical Quarterly* 53 (March 1969): 308–22.

5. "Address on Dedication of Jewish Seaside Home for Invalids," Ventor, New Jersey, July 10, 1904; "A Song at Twilight," Washington Hebrew Congregation, December 16, 1927; "Is Life Worth Living?" *Temple Pulpit* I 10 (n.d.); "The Modern

Message of the Trumpet"; "Integrated Personality from the Standpoint of the Minister," Research Club, Mayflower Hotel, Washington, D.C., November 21, 1932; "I Lift Mine Eyes to the Hills," Yom Kippur morning, Washington Hebrew Congregation, September 15, 1937. The careful reader will notice that for Rabbi Simon matter and God are actually interchangeable.

6. It is more meaningful to speak of many Progressive "movements" rather than a movement, on many levels, marked by the rapid formation and dissolution of coalitions around different and often contradictory causes; see Arthur S. Link, "What Happened to the Progressive Movement in the 1920's?" *American Historical Review* 64, no. 4 (July 1959): 833-51.

7. J. Joseph Hutmacher, "Urban Liberalism and the Age of Reform," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 49, no. 2 (September 1962): 231-42.

8. James T. Kloppenberg, "Uncertain Victory: Social Democracy and Progressivism" in *European and American Thought, 1870-1920* (New York, 1986), 361-62.

9. Typical is his "Our Public Schools," Testimonial Banquet for Hon. Washington Gardner, Washington, D.C., February 25, 1911. Its message paralleled the words of the numerous Progressive educators; see Lawrence A. Cremin, *The Transformation of the School: Progressivism in American Education, 1876-1957* (New York, 1962).

10. "The City Mind and the Municipal University," Alumni Association of Buchtel College, Akron, Ohio, June 18, 1913.

11. "The Cultivation of the Social Spirit in Jewish Sunday Schools," presented to the Jewish Religious School Union of New York and published in *American Hebrew* May 22, 1914; "The Synagogue with an Open Window," Dedication of Detroit Beth El, November 12, 1922. On efficient organization and Progressivism, see Martin J. Schiesl, *The Politics of Efficiency: Municipal Administration and Reform in America, 1800-1920* (Berkeley, 1977). On Progressive educators and cleanliness, see Adele Marie Shaw, "The True Character of New York Public Schools," *World's Work* 7 (1903-04): 420-21. Shaw notes that New York City teachers gave hundreds of baths each week.

12. The social gospel movement tied poverty to social conditions rather than individual depravity, and the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America (established in 1905) took an active role in social and reform movements. See Ronald C. White, Jr., and C. Howard Hopkins, *The Social Gospel: Religion and Reform in Changing America* (Philadelphia, 1976).

13. "The Religion of the Business Man," delivered to the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, Saint Louis, January 19, 1925.

14. Miscellaneous newspaper article about Rabbi Abram Simon, June 21, 1897; *Evening Star*, November 13, 1915, and March 8, 1919; "Sermons in Stones," Dedication of Jewish Community Center of Washington, May 3, 1925; "England's Challenge to Zionism," October 31, 1930; "Peace in Strength," Rosh Hashanah eve, Washington Hebrew Congregation, September 5, 1937; "Portion of the Week," *American Hebrew*, November 12, 1937.

15. "Jew and Christian: Can They Understand Each Other?" Mount Pleasant Congregational Church, November 19, 1922; "The Function of the Liberal Movement," Baltimore's Madison Avenue Temple, March 25, 1923; "The Religion of the Business Man"; "Unity in Israel," National Committee of Jewish Religious Organizations, New York, June 9, 1925; "Facing the Future," Washington, D.C.,

Council of Jewish Women, November 14, 1926; CCARY 35 (1925): 226–27.

16. *New Republic* 6 (1916): 254.

17. John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860–1925*, 2d ed. (New Brunswick, 1988), 198.

18. Miscellaneous newspaper article about Rabbi Abram Simon; “Responsibility and the Immigration Problem,” January 3, 1912.

19. Unpublished autobiography of Leona Hechinger Hacke (1889–19??), 36, in possession of Lois England.

20. After ten years, the NFTS had grown to 288 sisterhoods with about 45,000 members. *Proceedings of the Fifth Assembly of the NFTS* (New York, 1923), 102.

21. Mrs. Abram Simon, “Woman’s Influence in the Development of American Judaism,” in Union of American Hebrew Congregations, *Forty-First Annual Report: Proceedings of the Twenty-Fourth Council* (Cincinnati, 1915), 7682.

22. “The Call of the Sister,” Boston’s Temple Israel, December 1, 1913; “Message to Temple Emanu El Auxiliary,” New York, March 1, 1923, in Simon Collection, AJA; Mrs. Abram Simon, “Woman’s Influence,” 7680–98; “Address,” in *Proceedings of the Fortieth Anniversary Biennial Assembly of the NFTS* (April 1953), 49. For a very early speech by Carrie, when she was still Miss Carrie Oberdorfer, see “Philanthropy” in *American Jewess* 2, no. 10 (July 1989): 545–48.

23. “What can the women do for Judaism” (n.d.), in Simon Collection, AJA.

24. Judge Ben B. Lindsey wrote *The Companionate Marriage* in 1927, and by this term he meant a legal marriage, with legalized birth control, and with the right to divorce by mutual consent for childless couples, usually without the payment of alimony. Middle-class and upper-class Americans had been doing precisely these things routinely, but Lindsey wanted to make these steps available to the poor as well. Rabbi Simon, like most clergymen, misunderstood Lindsey’s argument (one wonders if he actually read the book) and joined both conservative and liberal clergy (including Rabbi Stephen S. Wise) in attacking him. In addition to the book, and numerous attacks on it and the author scattered through the *New York Times* during 1927 and 1928, see Lindsey’s long obituary in the *New York Times*, March 27, 1943, 13.

25. Dedication of Sioux City, Iowa, Mount Sinai Temple, *Reform Advocate*, September 14, 1901; *Evening Star*, October 9, 1920; “Washington and the American Tradition” (n.d.).