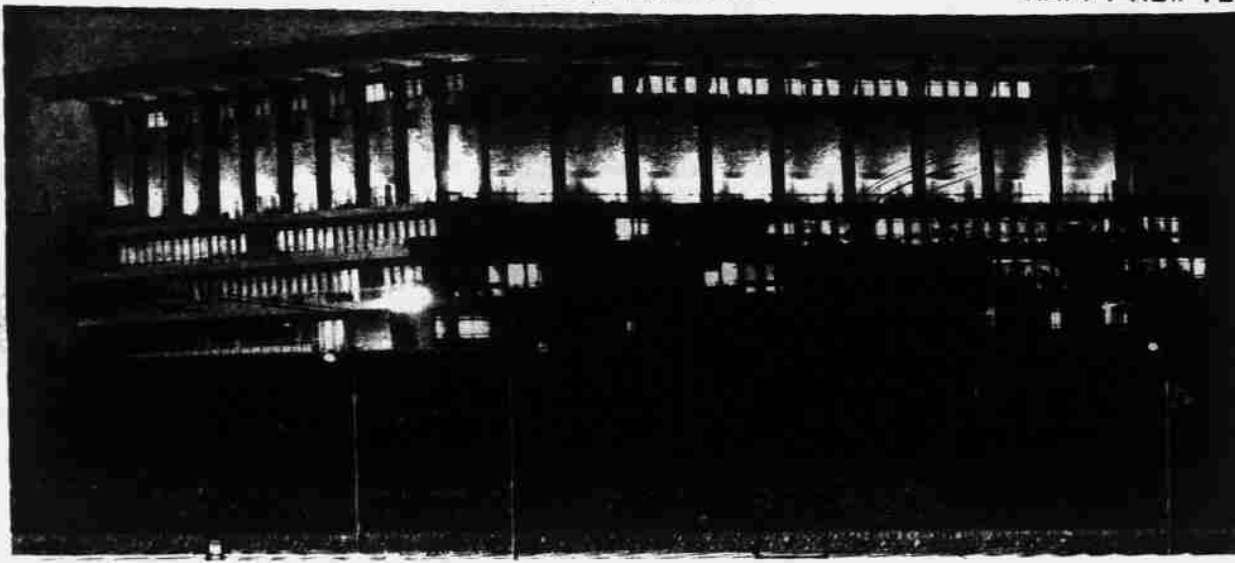


By Rabbi Emanuel Forman  
(Reprinted from Boston Jewish Advocate)

Two mountains are famous in Jewish history. One is Mount Sinai, upon which Moses stood to receive the Law, and the other is Mount Moriah, upon which Abraham stood ready to sacrifice his son Isaac. For the longest of times, neither of these mountains were in the possession of Israel. Mount Sinai, whose exact location is somewhat unclear, is situated in the Sinai Peninsula which was in Egypt's control. Mount Moriah, in the heart of the Old City of Jerusalem, for many years was in the possession of Jordan. Now, both of these sites belong to Israel. The question is for how long?

Foremost in the minds of every Israeli, and many a Jew throughout the world, is the issue of Jerusalem. Will Israel be able to retain the Old City, and, in particular, the site of the Holy Temple, Mount Moriah? It is interesting to note that no such question has arisen vis-a-vis Sinai. It is readily assumed that it, together with the entire peninsula, is negotiable. There was little emotional fervor surrounding its capture, now as well as in 1956, and when in 1956, Israel was compelled to withdraw from Sinai, there was little outcry and little protest on the part of the Jewish people. This, we know, would assuredly not be the case if Israel were compelled to give up Moriah. There is little doubt that such an eventuality would elicit an unprecedented outpouring of protest and anguish on the part of Jews everywhere in the world.



The Israeli Parliament at night.

## Mountains of Difference --- Sinai and Moriah

It is, then, as if the Jewish people is able to intuitively grasp what happens to be a major Halachic and theological contrast present in Jewish tradition. For Jewish law indicates that of these two sites, Sinai and Moriah, only one, Moriah, retains its "kedusha" (sanctity) to this very day. Sinai lost its sanctity once the revelatory experience came to an end. Moriah, on the other hand, was marked for sanctity at the time of Abraham. It was reinforced by Solomon with the construction of the Holy Temple and it has retained that sanctity

even after the destruction in 70 A.D.

Why? Why has the tradition seen fit to project this contrast? Why does Moriah receive primacy? Why did the rabbis deem it more significant than Sinai? What could there possibly be about Moriah which would outrank the religious significance of the Sinaitic experience, namely revelation itself?

The answer lies in the unique Judaic perspective of the sacred and the profane. It was Rabbi J. B. Soloveitchik who, in his Ish Hahalacha, projected as a

Halachic axiom that for the Jew nothing, with the exception of the Sabbath, ever becomes holy unless man makes it so. The new moon, the holidays, the land of Israel, the Holy Temple and its artifices all receive their sanctity through some religious gesture on the part of man. It appears that the Halachic category of kedusha, while directed towards divinity, is rooted in humanity.

לשנה טובה תכתבו



5728-1967

Rosh Hashonah...  
Thurs., Fri., Oct. 5, 6  
Fast of Gedaliah Sun., Oct. 8  
Yom Kippur Sat., Oct. 14  
Succoth-1st Day Thurs., Oct. 19  
Hoshana Rabba Wed., Oct. 25  
Shemini Atzeret Thurs., Oct. 26  
Simchat Torah Fri., Oct. 27  
\*Rosh Chodesh Heshvan...  
Nov. 4  
Rosh Chodesh Kislev Dec. 3  
Evening, 1st Chanukah  
Candle Dec. 26  
Chanukah-1st Day Dec. 27

5728-1968

\*Rosh Chodesh Tevet Jan. 2  
Rosh Chodesh Shevat Jan. 31  
Tu b'Shevat Feb. 15  
\*Rosh Chodesh Adar Mar. 1  
Fast of Esther Wed., Mar. 13  
Purim Thurs., Mar. 14  
Rosh Chodesh Nisan Mar. 30  
Evening, 1st Passover Seder...  
Fri., Apr. 12

Passover, 1st Day  
Second Seder Sat., Apr. 13  
\*Rosh Chodesh Iyar Apr. 29  
Lag Ba-Omer Thurs., May 16  
Rosh Chodesh Sivan May 28  
Shavuot-1st Day Sun., June 2  
Shavuot-2nd Day Mon., June 3  
\*Rosh Chodesh Tammuz...  
June 27  
Rosh Chodesh Av July 26  
Tisha Be-Av Sun., Aug. 4  
\*Rosh Chodesh Elul Aug. 25

5729-1968

Rosh Hashonah...  
Mon., Tues., Sept. 23-24  
Yom Kippur Wed., Oct. 2

\*Also Observe Day Before.

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