

KADOSH KADOSH KADOSH כבודו מלא כל הארץ קדוש ה' צבאות

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus

Dominus Deus Sabaoth.

Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua.¹

XIII. 5.

S Anctus, * Sánctus, Sánctus Dóminus Dé-us Sá-
 ba-oth. Pléni sunt caéli et térra gló-ri-a tú-a. Hosánna in
 excélsis. Benedíctus qui vénit in nómine Dómi-ni. Hosán-
 na in excélsis.

"I wanted to visit, touch, see, feel as many places as I could. I almost felt it a duty. As I entered broken gates or climbed over borken walls into cemeteries where a Jew may not have set foot in years, I wanted to spread my arms and embrace them all, embrace all the tombstones, all the people buried there, all the memories."

Ruth Ellen Gruber 'Jewish Heritage Travel' Washington 2007. p5

¹ The Charles Bridge (Czech: Karlův) is a famous historical bridge that crosses the Vltava river in Prague, Czech Republic. Absolute Location: 50°5'11.21"N 14°24'42.68"E
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Its construction started in 1357 under the auspices of King Charles IV, and finished in the beginning of the 15th century. As the only means of crossing the river Vltava (Moldau), the Charles Bridge was the most important connection between the Old Town, Prague Castle and adjacent areas until 1841. This "solid-land" connection made Prague important as a trade route between Eastern and Western Europe. The bridge was originally called the Stone Bridge (Kamenný) or the Prague Bridge (Pražský) but has been the "Charles Bridge" since 1870.

The bridge is 516 meters long and nearly 10 meters wide, resting on 16 arches shielded by ice guards. It is protected by three bridge towers, two of them on the Lesser Quarter side and the third one on the Old Town side. The Old Town bridge tower is often considered to be one of the most astonishing civil gothic-style buildings in the world. The bridge is decorated by a continuous alley of 30 statues and statuarys, most of them baroque-style, erected around 1700.

The Hebrew word for "spy" is meragel. The Hebrew for "holy" is kadosh, whose numerical value is 410. The Arizal points out that the most basic Hebrew letters for this number are tav, (400) and yud (10). When we add the tav and yud of "holy" to "spy," meragel, we receive a completely new word: margalit, which means "pearl." The pearls are the Divine sparks, hidden in the deep waters on the ocean bed. In order to become holy spies, we must know how to dive into the depths of the ocean of reality and retrieve the holy sparks that have fallen there. When we do so, we have filled our present reality, no matter where that may be, with the holiness of the Land of Israel.

Rabbi Yitzchak Ginsburgh

In the spring of 1272 or 1273, at the conclusion of his Good Friday sermon, an unknown preacher stood in a church in Paris, gestured toward a crucifix, and cried out to his flock: "Ha! Veroi chrestien, regarde, regarde, comment il a le chief encliné por toi beisier, les bras estendu por toi embrachier!" (Oh see, Christian, look, look! See how [Jesus] has his head leaning down to kiss you, his arms extended to embrace you!) Was there ever a more heartfelt response to a work of art, a clearer indication of the immediate power of the religious image to move and inspire? In encouraging his listeners to look up at a crucifix, so confident that they will find there bliss, the preacher seems to express supreme faith in the force and transparency of art, that famed Bible of the Simple.

Sara Lipton PhD

**Ernest
Farkas
2010**





Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus: Holy Holy Holy: Kadosh Kadosh Kadosh!

The Statuary of St. Cross – Calvary at Charles Bridge, Prague (Czechoslovakia)

What is this! Heresy! Apikorsus!

Mr. Farkas tells me about the Charles River bridge in Prague, that is has a statue with Hebrew words "kadosh" three times on the cross!!! Mr. Ernest Farkas, who wears his Auschwitz tattoos on his forearm in the summer without shame, whose childlike innocence hides the absolutely mastery this little man has of the Talmud and Bible, midrashim and halacha.² When Mr. Farkas was in the concentration camp, he had a dream one night. His father appeared to him sitting at the Pesach seder table. He warned him that his life was in danger and encouraged him to "*haltzach shtarck*" (remain strong). The next morning the Nazis lined up the camp inmates. Anyone who appeared to be weak or infirm was shot on the spot. When the guard approached Mr. Farkas, who was very weak and barely able to stand, he looked him up and down and said, "I won't waste a bullet on you," implying that he was already as good as dead. Mr. Farkas' vision of his father helped him survive and live through the war. This is the same man I often quote in class when incredulously I once challenged him as to his belief in a merciful divine after the horrors he experienced. He merely shrugged me off with a remark "what do you think we were trained for throughout our childhood in cheder!! mesiras nefesh! it was natural." He haunts me, this man, for he deconstructs the neat order of philosophical thinking that characterized western ethical premises about God's goodness. He still challenges me with his exhortation for "*peshitus and temimus*": simple faith! no questions!

We are discussing the Talmud (Berachot) and the difference of opinion regarding the recitation of the Jewish doxology, the "Shema". One opinion states it can be prayed in any language, and the other - only in the Holy tongue of Hebrew. He goes off on a tangent about the difference between speech-acts and the Hebrew tongue and I am trying to follow him when he drops this bomb! "Did you see the statue on the Charles River bridge over the river Vltava in Prague?" he asks.

What made him think of this icon?

What makes him continually go back to the Holocaust?

To Pre-war Europe and now Prague?

So of course I go searching for images of this icon!

I am stunned by the photograph!

² "Mr. Ernest Farkas is a person with a strong European heritage, who represents the best characteristics of an 'erliche yid' from an earlier generation. He was born in Pressburg and learned in the famed Nitra Yeshiva under Rav Michel Dov Weissmandel z"l. His life was disrupted in 1938 when the war began. Although he tried to elude the SS, he was eventually captured and spent the war years in Auschwitz and Matthausen and was forced by the Nazis to join in one of the infamous Death Marches. After arriving in America, he learned in Telshe Yeshiva in Cleveland and eventually settled in Chicago to begin life anew after surviving the horrors of the Holocaust.

Tzaddik B'Emunaso Yechiyeh – A tzaddik lives and is sustained by his faith. Mr. Farkas' emunah remained steadfast and he found strength in the Torah in the face of the greatest adversity. He had the resiliency to embark on a new life and raise a family dedicated to Torah principles in Midwest America. Over the past number of years, he has made the Kollel Bais Medrash an important part of his daily routine." (from 2009 Chicago Kollel dinner honoring Mr Farkas)

Well, you look at it! The Christ on the Cross, above his head “INRI” meaning “Jesus Nazarus Rex Yudaicum” or, “Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews.”

Yet what is so unique (and baffling) is that on all three upper staves of the cross are the letters in gold: the Hebrew “Kadosh Kadosh Kadosh!” “Holy Holy Holy”. The aleph below is backwards (more of that later). But when we examine our sister faith we find this very verse is the central core doxology as well! “Holy, Holy, Holy” is also a Christian hymn written by Reginald Heber (1783-1826). Its lyrics speak specifically on the Trinity. It was written specifically for the use on Trinity Sunday. John Bacchus Dykes composed the tune “Nicaea” specifically for this hymn in 1861. The name is a tribute to the First Council of Nicaea, which formalized the doctrine of the Trinity in 325 CE.

This statuary of the Crucifix and Calvary is known locally as “sousoší Kříže s Kalvárií”, and is one of the most historically interesting sculptures on the Charles Bridge, which gradually gained its present appearance throughout many centuries. The original wooden crucifix was installed at this place soon after 1361 and was probably destroyed by the Hussites in 1419. A new crucifix with a wooden corpus was erected in 1629 but was severely damaged by the Swedes towards the end of the Thirty Years' War.

The golden Hebrew text on the crucifix was added on September 14th, 1696. Legend has it that the text was placed there as punishment for a Prague Jew, Eliass Backoffen, who had been allegedly convicted of debasing the Holy Cross by not removing his hat while passing by it (others say spitting). A bronze tablet with explanatory text in Czech, German and Hebrew was mounted under the statue by the City of Prague in 2000.

The tablet's placement came after an American Rabbi, Ronald Brown (currently of Temple Beth Am in Merrick, New York), then age 25 and a rabbinical student of Hebrew Union College, was passing over the bridge and noted the possibly offensive nature of the placing of the text. Upon a direct request to the mayor, the tablet was soon placed in front of the statue.

Eric Brown wrote on this bizarre recent turn of events as follows in the Jewish Week (8.6.99):

“In 1971, Ronald Brown visited Prague for the first time and was disturbed by what he saw at the famous 500-year-old Charles Bridge: a centuries-old crucifixion statue framed by one of Judaism's most sacred prayers. The then-25-year-old rabbinical student at Hebrew Union College was upset by the symbolism of the Hebrew inscription in relation to the cross...

But 17th century Czech officials employed it for another purpose: to punish and humiliate Jews for the alleged blasphemy committed by a Prague Jewish leader and to validate Christianity's superiority.

“It's offensive,” says Rabbi Brown. “It's using Hebrew Scripture against ourselves to confirm the teaching of the Trinity.” The inscription has long been a source of dismay for Jewish tourists and the city's small observant Jewish community, particularly as local

guides retell various versions of the Jewish blasphemer legend, which Jewish researchers say is false.

Now, for the first time in 300 years, an effort is under way to resolve the issue, with the help of Rabbi Brown of Merrick, L.I., and a delegation from the newly founded North American Board of Rabbis. Next month, Prague Jewish leaders and city and Czech officials are expected to meet to discuss placing an explanatory text alongside the statue to explain the true circumstances behind the placement of the Hebrew quotation at the W.E. Brohn gift bronze statue bought in Dresden in 1657.

The community is among the oldest in Europe and during the Middle Ages was the largest and most revered, serving as home to the illustrious Rabbi Judah Loew, creator of the legendary Golem. In 1939 there were more than 50,000 Jews in Prague; today there are 2,000, many fleeing during the Holocaust.

Local legend has it that a Jewish leader named Elias Backoffen blasphemed Christianity at the statue in 1693, and was found guilty during a fixed trial conducted by Prague's Christian government officials. On March 20, 1694, Backoffen was fined 1,000 gold florins. To punish the Jews, the Czech government on Sept. 13, 1696 added to the statue a gold Hebrew inscription, paid for with Backoffen's fine.

Following the NABOR trip, Rabbi Brown wrote to Prague Mayor Jan Kasl requesting that the offending inscription be removed. "The Hebrew words do not belong there. Perhaps they belong in the Jewish museum," he wrote. But the mayor and the office of national landmarks rejected the suggestion, citing the relic's national landmark status. "The decoration of the Charles Bridge cannot be changed because the National Heritage Law excludes any such intervention," the mayor responded in a May 7 letter to Rabbi Brown. According to the State Monument Care Institute, the Charles Bridge "is among the most important monuments of both the City and the country. Currently it is in the highest category of monument protection."

Kasl did agree, however, to consider placing a plaque of explanation beneath the sculpture, according to his response to Rabbi Brown. On June 17, Pavlat sent a letter to Prague's Monument Care Department proposing the text to be fixed beneath the crucifix. Jewish researchers dispute the legend contained in Czech tour books and repeated by local guides.

Pavlat explained that the true story 306 years ago revolved around a legal war between representatives of the Czech Jewish community. Rabbi Schneier said the explanatory plaque would be a major step. "To put this into context, this statue is like the Statute [sic] of Liberty for Czech citizenry," he said. "For any Jew who has been to Prague, this is a very big thing." Petr Gandalovic, the Polish general consul in New York who accompanied the NABOR group in March, said he is optimistic a solution can be reached. "I understand it might be very damaging for Jewish people, just the fact that it's been there for centuries," he told The Jewish Week Monday. "It's better to get together and find a way how these things can be explained to the general public to avoid misunderstandings and sensational explanations from tourist guides." But he said it is

also important to ensure that the general population of Prague is not offended by any changes to its historic bridge.”

Eli Valley in his travelogue³ quotes Dr. Alexander Putik from the Prague Jewish Museum who unearthed the real story. Apparently there was a feud between two Jewish merchants who were courting business and franchises to do with local tax collection and distribution, a highly profitable business. One of the merchants, Aaron Lichtenstadt, accused his rival Elias Bakoffen of treason, and the Jesuit Bohemian court was only too eager to discover such plots. After two horrendous years, on March 18th, 1694 the court could only find him guilty of blasphemy and intimidation. The sentence was eventually reduced to a thousand gold florins payable to “charity”, so by September of 1696 the money paid for the gold letters on the cross.

Far from those political and cultural events surrounding the statue, I would like to return to my initial shock on seeing the image of the cross with the three Hebrew words in gold, unmistakable and giving this cross a unique image never ever seen before. I was reminded of *White Crucifixion* by Marc Chagall, which also shocked me. (See further in my essays section.) The history (if the museum research is correct) no longer supports the Jewish martyrology theme. Of course this holds much mythic power over us as the European historical record of Church-sponsored anti-semitism attests. It speaks of a different, darker history of Jew turning against Jew (the *masser* in Yiddish) with its own documentary sources all the way to the kapos in WWII.

Our self image as a victimized group lends itself to legends and myths that perpetuate the story line, whereas in reality the facts bear a different truth, one we are less inclined to buy culturally.

So, why did Mr. Farkas refer me to this iconic image in our discussion? Why does he wish me to stay away from all this speculative discussion and concentrate on being a “simple Jew” (echoes of my Rebbe!)? Not simplistic, mind you, rather work a purity of spirit that calls for the need for authentic experience which is not compatible with all this pseudo-intellectual meditation on two religions “from the outside”. Farkas reminds me of that iconoclast Rubinow who influenced too many modern leaders in Heidelberg earlier in the 20th century a Polish Jewish talmudic scholar living, ironically, in Heidelberg!

In Germany they define a straight line historically (after all Hegel invented history!) as the shortest distance between two massacres! Can I ever overcome these two mutually attracted and simultaneously repellant forces? A millenium of blood and sacrifice, martyrdom and ashes? Should I? For the sake of the future? In memory of those who died for this cross? The Jewish blood spilled? How dare I? After all Ernest Farkas went through Germany's hell. It is tattooed on his arm until the grave. His every breath relives this. His very being calls out “zachor!” “Remember”. Who am I to even dare?

³ Valley, Eli. *The Great Jewish Cities of Central and Eastern Europe*. New Jersey: Jason Aronson, 1999: 142.

Yet I see beyond (do I even have the right?) ecumenism, the mere living side by side in a secular society. Inter-faith changes nobody, I agree. The Rabbis do not support it. It leads nowhere. I remember at age 16 (1966) travelling in the miserable winter to Koblenz to learn bible with German youth. There was nothing to discuss. But now I believe that the future demands we of all faiths must join hands in common enemies: fundamentalism, fanaticism, environmental catastrophes, pollution and above all human rights and human suffering. As a global village our silence as “professed” followers of this or that faith will be seen by all as a failure. We who claim to represent heaven on earth must change radically for the new threats that will engulf all of us despite our petty denominational doctrinal differences.

So this image, while reflecting the jarring past may, just may, point to a future where the fiery prophet's words “Holy Holy Holy” may signify a clarion call to the faithful of both faiths, to put aside all differences for the sake of a common goal. To change man's image (*tzelem*) and make it a little bit more like God's (*demut*). Could there be a focal point of convergence? Maybe. The Cross represents the martyrdom of the king of the Jews and this “*mesiras nefesh*” and the incarnation of the divine (Logos) within the human sounds so familiar to those who understand the esoteric wisdom of both Jewish and Christian kabbalah. It may be that the two faiths can talk to each other not only on the superficial social justice issues, (as proposed by harav J.B. Soloveitchik in response to the orthodox move towards ecumenism in the 70's) but also on theological dimensions that resonate. For this to happen will require a movement away from the easy doctrinal polemics of the past and into a New Age quantum type of theology that pays respect to the new science and the new physics.

That bridge over the river Charles, with its solid icon that spans a millenium, as well as Farkas's comments to me have haunted me now for days.

- (1) Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus
 Dominus Deus Sabaoth.
 (2) Pleni sunt caeli et terra
 gloria tua.

This latin translation of the hebrew inscription from the Hebrew Bible which reads:

קָדוֹשׁ קָדוֹשׁ קָדוֹשׁ יְהוָה יְצַבְאוֹת; מְלֵא כָּל-
 הָאָרֶץ, כְּבוֹדוֹ.

Ironic how these words represent the high point in the Hebrew service and apparently the Christian service too. These hallowed words by the Hebrew prophet Isaiah reflect

the angelic world (not our human one!) and his terrible vision of the celestial beings giving praise. Maybe that might give us pause for thought.

The Holy mystic the Ari pointed out the numerical value of the word itself pointing to a semantic and numerological mysticism as pointed out in the preface by Rabbi Ginsburgh. I was wondering whether even in this place of Christian Prague, where the legendary Jew who did not bend his cap to the cross was “punished” and fined for the disrespect, where the Nazis some 300 years later removed the holy golden letters, specifically, for their gold, should ironically be the very place - the location - where the hiddenness of the divine might be most manifest.

I am haunted by this image the way the *White Crucifixion* of Chagall mixes the religious symbols of two cultures claiming the same divine text as authoritative. Ironically could this be the location where the hiddenness of the divine might be most manifest as my Rebbe, Rabbi Nachman, speaks of the divine found in the most unexpected places!

Europe's landscape is littered with crosses and creches; Christian symbols overlay ancient pagan sacred sites and dot the highways, byways and nature trails marking the site of individual sense of the mystery of and within nature. The Jews in contrast had no icons, rather were preserved as a relic of the “old Israel” by the Church. I remember visiting the old Jewish cemetery in Lublin looking for Reb Zadok and Reb Leibe Eiger, the two disciples of the the Holy Izhbitze Rebbe, and found a desolate walled-in graveyard with no tombstones. The Nazis and locals had pillaged the marble from it and all that was left was a green field of grass. Across the street was the catholic cemetery with flowers festooning most of the graves and the sounds of the Sunday chapel choir pierced the air with its child-like innocence and purity. The two cemeteries divided by a road were so enigmatic of the history of these two faiths that I could not conceive that there could ever be a reconciliation of the two, never mind the ongoing antisemitism taking place in Europe to this day. The two cemeteries lay in such stark contrast to each other yet there I was, overjoyed to have found my Hassidic masters in a newly constructed brick Ohel (although no names or placques were present). I knew it was them when seeing the PriZadik and the Toras Emes (their authored works) on the window sill.

Reb Nachman teaches that the words *הָאֵרֶץ, כְּבוֹדוֹ* - “the world is filled with His glory” - means the whole earth, not just the holy spaces, and that at times He must hide His glory in the most unenexpected places.⁴ In an ironic twist God is to be found where one might never had expected, on the “other side of the tracks” for Hassidism insists that He is to be found everywhere for “there is no place devoid of Him” (Zohar). For Rav Nachman all human beings are salvageable, no matter what creed, all have access to the divine, if sought, all are redeemable.

⁴ Likutei Mehoran II:12

Rabbi Ginsburgh also discussed on Innerpedia⁵ the name *tzevaot* as one of God's names:

Tzevakot, as a Name of God, is the only one of the revealed Divine Names that does not appear explicitly in the Pentateuch. It first appears as a Divine Name in the Bible (in Samuel 1:11) in the heartfelt prayer of the barren woman, Chanah, to merit the birth of a son: "And she made a vow and said: Havayah Tzevakot, if You see the affliction of your handmaiden, and remember me, and do not forget Your handmaiden, and give to Your handmaiden the seed of men; then shall I deliver him to God for all the days of his life...." God answered her prayer and gave her a son, Samuel, who "is weighed as equal to Moses and Aaron."

Moses and Aaron correspond to the two sefirot of netzach and hod (from which derive all levels of prophecy, as taught in Kabbalah). In Chanah's prayer (considered by our sages to be the archetype of prayer in the Bible), the Tetragrammaton Name Havayah followed by the name Tzevakot corresponds in particular to the sefirah of netzach, the level of Moses. Most amazingly, from the beginning of the book of Samuel, God's Name Tzevakot (appearing here for the first time), is the 148th word of the text. 148 = netzach! In Kabbalah, Samuel personifies the ultimate rectification of Netzach (which had been blemished from the time that Esau's angel injured Jacob's thigh). He is the one who said (in victory over Amalek, Esau's grandson, the arch-enemy of Israel): "and also, the Eternity of Israel (Netzach Yisrael) shall neither deceive nor regret, for no mortal is He, to regret" (Samuel 15:29).

The Name Tzevakot represents God's revealing Himself within the context of His "Hosts" that reside in the lower worlds of Beriah, Yetzirah, and Asiyah. Our sages read Tzevakot as Ot hu tzava shelo—"He is a sign amongst His hosts." Here "His hosts" refers either to the angels or, more properly, to the souls of Israel (those of the souls of Israel whose revealed consciousness derives from the lower worlds).

Of the 18 possible "full spellings" of the Name Tzevakot, that which possesses the highest numerical value comes to 1165. In the story of Creation, God planted in the garden of Eden two special trees, "the tree of life" and "the tree of knowledge of good and evil."

The ultimate power of God's Name Tzevakot is to unite the essence of the two trees of paradise, to bring the world to its Divinely intended state of eternal life and the knowledge of the true Divine good which converts all apparent evil to good.

It dawned on me that Mr. Farkas, who sent me on this journey back into his Holocaust world, was stretching me to see on this bridge in Prague, that great medieval Christian town, the confluence of two daughters of Israel, locked in a millennial struggle, and the

⁵ http://www.innerpedia.org/index.php?title=Main_Page his innovative web-based Jewish encyclopedia of kabbalah

absolute irony of these Hebrew letters appended to the crucifix. Not only Hebrew words but the names of God Himself as revealed in kabbalah, to transform the darkness into light.

I am reminded of the historic visit of Pope John Paul II to Jerusalem in 2000. He called Jews "our elder brothers" and I felt that this was the most important statement to be made by the official church since *Nostra Aetate* in 1965.⁶ Although his comments on the Holocaust left many disappointed, I felt the gesture and the visit would change things forever. Naïve? Maybe.

Going to Krakow and other cities with old Jewish quarters, I can still feel the presence of piety and worship, despite the absence of anything but tourist kitsch. Eli Valley had called this a Jewish Jurassic park adventure, but on days when the busloads of tourists are absent one can stand in the old cemetery before the Rema and the Megale Amukos and literally feel the presence of ancient tradition and martyrdom. Farkas is right on target here. I must connect with this ancient piety without fooling myself that I am anything but a product of modernity. Even my father's father sat in a modern electric-lit apartment in Vienna, where the "ost Juden" who arrived into Vienna after WWI were looked down upon as backward.

So how to balance the modern sensibility and need to work together with other faiths, who had at one time been openly antisemitic, without giving up one's sacred connection to the 'religion of the fathers' as well as their beliefs?

I think Rabbi Rami Shapiro comes closer when he speaks of interspirituality:⁷

"The religious landscape of the world is changing. No longer solely dominated by separate and securely entrenched religious institutions, the religious lives of people, especially people in the United States, Canada and other postindustrial nations, are increasingly defined by a sense of individual freedom, universality and association with more than one religious or spiritual tradition.

By encouraging InterSpirituality we do not intend the blending of religions or the ending of religious diversity. On the contrary, by InterSpirituality we mean the increasing spiritual creativity emerging from the meeting of, and dialogue between, the world's major religious traditions. This meeting acknowledges differences between religions and affirms the greater unity they all share. This unity provides the common ground from which religious diversity flourishes. People are discovering that their respect for and love of the religion of their birth need not preclude a similar respect for the full range of human spiritual creativity.

⁶ Part four speaks of the bond that ties the people of the 'New Covenant' (Christians) to Abraham's stock (Jews). It states that even though some Jewish authorities and those who followed them called for Jesus' death, the blame for this cannot be laid at the door of all those Jews present at that time, nor can the Jews in our time be held as guilty, thus repudiating an indiscriminate charge of deicide: 'the Jews should not be presented as rejected or accursed by God.' The Declaration also decries all displays of antisemitism made at any time by anyone.

⁷ <http://www.spiritualpaths.net/institute/videos/rabbi-rami-shapiro-interspirituality/>

And so I wonder, looking at this image, an icon that survived the last 400 years, standing on that river in that town 70 years after the Tremendum that left Europe bereft of its Jews. That left Christian Europe stained with its Jewish blood all the way up to the papacy. This icon that literally welds the Hebrew to the cross...those words that mean so much to both faiths, central to the doctrine of both faiths. Yet deep in the subterranean mythic consciousness, the words imply the concept that the higher level of divinity can cross all boundaries, even between perpetrator and victim.

The image - the icon - has a life of its own and over the last two months it has penetrated into my consciousness, not leaving me rest. All change is traumatic and one pays a heavy price. Rav Kook⁸ expressed this in a letter:

"In all religions there are authentic elements, a 'seeking after God and His ways in the world' ... At such a time as this, we must clarify the common elements of all religion, according to the degree of their development, and not be afraid of the customary disdain and deep hostility that lurks in the soul against everything alien."⁹

In Midrash, the feud between Judasim and Christianity is often projected onto the archetypal biblical figures of Jacob and Esau. Rav Kook transforms these images into positive charges:

"The brotherly love of Esau and Jacob ... will ultimately rise above the confusions fostered by evil emanating from our creaturely character: it will rise above them and turn to light and compassion without end."¹⁰

Finally he proposed that different religions were not meant to compete but rather to collaborate, the diversity of religion being a legitimate expression of the human spirit:

"Conventional theology assumes that different religions must necessarily oppose one another ... But on reaching full maturity that human spirit aspires to rise above every manner of conflict and opposition, and a person then recognizes all expressions of the spiritual life as an organic whole."¹¹

In the spirit of a new type of *interspiritual theology*, I provide an image and a possibility through the art form of Sylvia Klein of Ottawa. I asked cousin Sylvia to re-imagine the cross with the golden letters so as to move the hide-bound orthodox boxes into which

⁸ The Netziv – Rosh Yeshiva of the Volozhin Yeshiva - said about Maran Ha-Rav Kook: "He is equal to everyone else [in the Volozhin Yeshiva]", "There was never a student like this in Volozhin" and "If the Volozhin Yeshiva was established only for this great student – it would have been enough." Tal Ha-Re'eiyah pp. 59-60, Shivchei Ha-Re'eiyah p. 45.

⁹ Igrot Harayah Vol I, Jerusalem 1943, Letter 43.

¹⁰ Igrot Harayah Vol I, Jerusalem 1943, Letter 112.

¹¹ Tackemoni, 'Talele Orot' Vol I 17, Ikve Hatzon 'Hamachshavot' in Eder Hayakar 122-125.

we fall and somehow move beyond into new possibilities for dialogue, fully cognizant of the horrors of the past yet open to the sacred tasks of the present ... to love fully.

Her work is available on line at :

<http://web.mac.com/sylvia Klein/Main/Home.html>



