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## Address of a Young Jewess

The following address was delivered by Miss Sadie Spielberger before the Westminster Presbyterian Sunday school at New Decatur, Ala. Miss Spielberger is only 16 years old, and made this talk at a special request.

I have great pleasure this morning in having the opportunity of speaking to you about our religion—the Jewish—and I hope the Sunday school will gather some new ideas, some new lessons, some new light from my few words, and be drawn closer to us by them.

We, like you, are divided into classes—the Orthodox and Reform Jews. The Orthodox Jews adhere to all the old customs held in Jerusalem. We hold the same principles as they, and almost the same aims, but have let our religion grow and expand with the world. I would like to give you some examples of things we differ in:

They call their house of worship a synagogue; we call ours a temple. Their services are conducted in Hebrew; ours in English. During their services they wear a sort of mantle of black and white stripes, called a tallis, we do not wear this. The Bible says, "Thou shalt bind them as a sign upon thy hand and as frontlets between

thine eyes." This the Orthodox Jew interprets literally and wears during his prayers the tephilin in a little black ebony box which he binds around his forehead and left arm near the heart with black leather straps. The Reformed Jew thinks this only another way of saying, to have the commandments near you—by your heart's. There are many other slight differences, but both classes believe in the One, Eternal God, keep the same holy days, and believe in the coming Golden age: The Messianic reign of universal peace and happiness; the kingdom of God on earth when all men will be united by the bonds of Justice, Love and Truth, and the whole earth will be filled with the knowledge of God, and worship together.

The Orthodox believe that this Golden age will be brought about by a Jew, called the Messiah, and that when he comes, all the Jews will go back to Jerusalem and there will be a resurrection of the dead. That is why they keep up all the old customs.

The Reform Jew, however, thinks that Messiah will not come; but that all the Jews will bring about the Golden age, when everyone will believe in the One Divine Power, and that is why we have been scattered all over the whole world; and though all through history we have been persecuted and martyred, we still exist to teach religion as we are taught in the Bible.

Our house of worship is very much in appearance like your church. We have a six-cornered star for an emblem. We also have a scroll called the Safer Torah; it is written in Hebrew and is the original copy of the Bible. It is only read on the Sabbath and on Holy days. The letters vary and each one is just a certain size, for in olden times, when print was done by hand we wanted to insure the accuracy of the writer and so we were very particular in order that this sacred work should be done correctly.

I would like to give you an idea of how our services are conducted. They open by singing of the choir, and all our singing is done by the choir, then come the prayers, responsive reading, singing and sermon ending in a benediction and music.

Now I would like to quote to you one of our cardinal doctrines because it explains so well some of our most important teachings:

"Man is the son of God, having one Father, all men, irrespective of race, country, creed or condition, form one brotherhood, and should deal with one another like brothers created in God's image and formed in His likeness; the soul comes from the Creator pure and sinless, and is immortal, even though the body returns to dust. God-like in his origin, man should be God-

like in his life; yet if he sins, he still remains God's child and may obtain forgiveness if he repents, forsake his evil ways and return to the right path."

Now, lastly, I would like to tell you briefly about some of our most important holy days. They begin on the evening before, and their beginning is celebrated by the lighting of candles. On these days we do not write, sew, or do any kind of work, but devote ourselves wholly to prayers and the customs of the day.

The day of Atonement—Yom Kippur—is our most holy of holy days. It is a fast day. We do not fast because we think by doing so our sins will be forgiven, but it is a day given up to our soul's food; trying to forget our bodily wants. We realize our sinfulness and try to repent. It is a day to make yourselves morally better and help the poor.

New Year's day, or Rosh Hashona, is another day of self-examination, trying to make people happy in different ways. It does not fall on the days your New Year does, owing to the difference in calendars.

Now, our Passover feast lasts seven days. It is in commemoration of the time God brought Israel out of Egypt. During this week we only eat certain kinds of food to make us think of the time our forefathers were compelled to do so. The unleavened bread, or Matzos, which you must have heard of, is a sample of the food eaten in the wilderness. It was made out of flour and water and baked in the sun.

Our confirmation day, or Shabouth, is the anniversary of the time God gave Moses the ten commandments on Mt. Sinai. We children get confirmed on that day, and because I would like you to hear what we say, and also because I would like you to hear one of our prayers, I will repeat the one I said on my confirmation day two years ago:

"Yes, we thank Thee, our Heavenly Father, for our life, our health, our youth and our birthright, and fervently we pray Thee for Thy guidance and support that we might prove ourselves worthy of these priceless gifts. Bless the words we shall utter here and may their lessons sink deeply into our hearts; bless the prayers we shall offer here and may those earnest petitions strengthen our holy resolve to walk humbly with Thee. May this hours of confirmation bind us with firm ties of piety and reverence to our beloved parents and grandparents, and in the fullness of confidence and joy may it turn their hearts to us, thus realizing the ancient word. Not with you only do I make this covenant and this oath, but with him that standeth here with us this day before the Lord, our God, and also with him that is not here with us this day." Amen.—Ex.

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