

WILLIAM W. SIMPSON

**FREEDOM, JUSTICE
AND RESPONSIBILITY**

A RETROSPECTIVE PROSPECT

THE THIRTEENTH SACKS LECTURE

OXFORD CENTRE FOR
POSTGRADUATE HEBREW STUDIES

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FREEDOM, JUSTICE AND RESPONSIBILITY

A RETROSPECTIVE PROSPECT

I COUNT IT a great honour to have been invited to join the distinguished company of my predecessors in this lectureship which was established twelve years ago in celebration of the golden wedding of Dr Samuel Sacks and his late wife Dr Elsie Sacks. It is a great pleasure to have Dr Samuel Sacks with us this evening and to share in this commemoration of so happy and fruitful a partnership.

There is, I suppose, a sense in which this lecture can be regarded as a memorial occasion in that it commemorates an event of some historic interest and significance: the first-ever international conference of Christians and Jews specifically organized as such. Jews and Christians had, of course, met in many places, under many auspices, and over many centuries, but never, so far as I am aware, as they did here in Oxford just forty years ago, with the specific purpose of discussing (as the report of the conference put it) 'their mutual responsibilities and the possibilities of joint action in relation to human welfare and order on the basis of their common convictions and with proper regard for differences of faith and practice'.

The conference was held at Lady Margaret Hall from 30 July to 6 August, 1946, under the joint auspices of the National Conference of Christians and Jews of the United States and the then recently established British Council of Christians and Jews. I was fortunate enough to be much involved both in the planning and in the conference itself. Indeed I am now one of the relatively few survivors and confess to feeling something of what I imagine Moses must have felt as he approached the foothills of Mount Nebo, for not only was I present at the conference itself, but I have been occupied ever since in one way and another with its outcome.

I used to think that the Almighty was perhaps a little hard on that great leader of his people in that, after forty troublous years in the wilderness, he was vouchsafed only a distant prospect of the Promised Land itself from a mountain top still 'in enemy territory'. I am, I hope, a little wiser now. Moses may have enjoyed the distant panorama of terrestrial promise, but I wonder whether he could have endured all the trials and tribulations that were to follow upon that fateful crossing of the Jordan down to this present day.

But let me begin on a more cheerful note. We remember the past in order that we may better equip ourselves to cope with the present and prepare for the future, being careful at all times to guard against the temptation to think of all our past achievements as entirely our own and to forget that our only proper concern is with 'all the way the Lord our God has led us', even when he seemed determined to avoid all the seemingly more obvious short cuts!

Forty years ago we had just emerged from the Second World War. We had just begun to recognize the extent of the horrors of the Holocaust. We had witnessed the unleashing upon the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki of man's newest and most destructive weapon, under the shadow of which we still live, even while we are gathered this evening in this lovely corner of 'England's green and pleasant land'.

The process which resulted in the Oxford conference of 1946 began in London during the height of the Nazi blitz. The American Conference of Christians and Jews (the NCCJ) sent a three-man team (a Catholic Priest, a Protestant Pastor, and a Rabbi) to check on the morale of the British people under the bombing. They made contact with the Council of Christians and Jews (the CCJ), four representatives of which spent an evening with them. When we had answered their questions about the present we went on to speculate about the future.

Two years later, in March 1944, the CCJ Executive Committee was specially convened to meet Rabbi Dr Israel Goldstein, the President of the Synagogue Council of America and a member of the board of the NCCJ (who, I was delighted to see a week or two ago, has just celebrated his ninetieth birthday in Jerusalem, where he now lives). The minutes of that meeting record that after a wide ranging discussion of the programme of the NCCJ it was agreed that

one of the first things to be done after the war would be to hold an international conference representative of the various bodies at work in the field of Jewish-Christian relations in order to secure clear co-operation and better understanding of the programme.

It was an exciting and historic moment. The CCJ had committed itself to an international project at a time when, apart from involvement in the war effort itself, international relations were difficult to establish and still more difficult to maintain. There were many questions to be faced. Where should such a conference be held? Who would organize it? Who should be invited? Who would finance it? And what should be its programme?

With a flair for the dramatic our American colleagues suggested that the conference be held in one of the Nazi-occupied countries. Somewhat more realistically the British CCJ suggested that such a plan was likely to prove impracticable 'until some considerable time after the cessation of hostilities'. Great Britain or one of a small selection of places in unoccupied Europe, such as Stockholm or Geneva, were suggested as possible alternatives. In the end we settled for England and in England for Oxford.

On the question of membership there were also interesting differences. The CCJ felt that the value of the conference 'would depend entirely upon the representative character of the bodies constituting it'. It should, for example, cover all sections (and I repeat 'all') of both Jewish and Christian communities, 'including, in view of its almost inevitable focus upon European affairs, representation of the Eastern Orthodox Church'. On the American side Everett Clinchy, of blessed memory, a rare combination of dreamer and man of affairs who died only a few months ago, pressed for the inclusion of Muslims and 'representatives of other Asian religious cultures'. Dr Visser T'Hooft of the World Council of Churches (then still in process of formation) urged that an informal conference of leaders who were fully informed of the situation inside Europe would be more valuable.

In some sense they were all right. But since in the end there could be only one conference it was decided to settle for Christian and Jewish members of such joint bodies as were then known to exist or to be in process of formation (and they were still very few) and to insist that all who came should do so in their personal rather than any officially representative capacities.

At this point it may be of interest to recall some of the organizational problems facing conference promoters in those days. When, for example, it was suggested that I should go to New York for consultations in December 1945 my passage had to be booked, not through a travel agent, but through the Ministry of Information. The latter arranged for me to travel on the *Queen Elizabeth*, which was still sailing as a troop ship. A small group of about fifty civilians, including myself, found itself squeezed into the complement of the ship, numbering some 14,000 Canadian troops who were being repatriated via New York (since it was winter), and I cannot remember how many crew members. It was not exactly a luxury journey. For the most part the only seating to which we had access was the life jacket we were required to carry everywhere with us. Happily, under the circumstances, the ship was 'dry', the strongest drink available at any of the bars being the ubiquitous Coca Cola. I was lucky enough to get a flight home, but in those pre-jet days the journey, which included calling at Gander in Newfoundland and spending a night at Shannon on account of frost and fog, took thirty-six hours in all. And even then we landed near Bournemouth.

Accommodation in Oxford for the summer of 1946 was, of course, at a premium. Happily, two days before leaving for New York, I received a letter from Lady Margaret Hall offering us places for a maximum of 130 people from 30 July to 6 August at an inclusive charge of 12/- per head per day subject to a guarantee on our part of a minimum of 100 and the payment of a 'fine' of 7/- per day for any shortfall on that number. We accepted with alacrity, and I was interested to find in going through the CCJ records that the bill for a conference with 151 participants (there was a certain amount of coming and going during the eight days that it lasted) amounted to £529. Those were the days!

Our most important task was to formulate the theme of the conference. By October 1945, moved by the consideration that we should

concentrate upon the re-establishment of those human values which are the inheritance of Judaism and Christianity, and upon the examination of the means by which the two great contributory streams of civilization can powerfully make that influence felt

it was agreed that the theme should be 'Freedom, Justice and Responsibility'. At that time these three words had a familiar ring. As early as January 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, in his annual message to the Congress of the United States, had focused attention upon four freedoms, the achievement of which he envisaged as the primary purpose of the war effort, and their consolidation the object of all peace aims programmes. Mankind, he urged, must be guaranteed Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Worship, Freedom from Economic Want and Freedom from Aggression. Implicit in all these was Freedom from Fear. All this belonged not to the realm of ideas and ideals alone, but to the daily needs of millions throughout the world. But if freedom in any of these forms was to be achieved it could only be upon the basis of justice being done, and seen to be done, at all levels in a wide range of societies. And the achievement of justice in its turn was seen to depend upon the exercise of responsibility by the members of those societies.

Under this broad cover it was decided to set up six commissions. The first was to deal with Group Tensions, with special reference to antisemitism and the problems of displaced persons, and the second with the Fundamental Postulates of Christianity and Judaism in Relation to Human Order. A third was to concentrate upon Religious Liberty and a fourth upon Justice and its Claims in Social, Economic and Political life. The fifth was to focus upon Mutual Responsibility in the Community and the sixth upon Education and Training for Responsible Citizenship. In the event there was a seventh: a Youth Commission, of which more later.

Preparations for these commissions were entrusted to a quite extraordinary person, Malcolm Spencer, a Free Church Minister who at that time was a member of the CCJ Executive Committee. In his younger days, as a Student Christian Movement Secretary, he had written a book on *Christians and Industry*. He later became involved with the National Council for Social Service. All this was splendid preparation for this particular assignment in connection with the conference. I vividly recall how he would arrive in the CCJ office with a pocket full of notes and memoranda written on odd scraps of paper which he would hand over to a typist who schooled herself into deciphering a script which all her colleagues had given up as illegible. One result of her efforts is appended to the minutes of the CCJ Executive Committee for 29 November 1945. Running to seven foolscap pages and unquestionably the work of Malcolm Spencer, it set out in detail the questions to be broached by each of the six commissions, and

provided the basis for my discussions with our American colleagues when I visited New York shortly afterwards.

During the early months of 1946 Malcolm Spencer succeeded in bringing together a number of experts covering a wide range of interests for a series of discussion meetings, some of them residential, for more detailed consideration of matters to be brought before the conference. Outstanding among these was the group which prepared the way for the declaration on the Fundamental Postulates of Christianity and Judaism which, by common consent, was recognized as the outstanding achievement of the conference. Papers written by members of that group were subsequently published under the title *The Foundations of our Civilization*.

Canon L. W. Grensted of Oxford, who was Nolloth Professor of the Philosophy of the Christian Religion, paid tribute in his introduction to this pamphlet to the authors of these papers, who included a Jesuit priest, Father Corbishley, of Campion Hall, Oxford; Rabbi Dr Isidore Epstein, Principal of Jews' College and editor of the Soncino translation of the Talmud into English; Rabbi Dr Israel Mattuck, the Senior Rabbi of the Liberal Jewish Synagogue; T. H. Robinson who, by that time, was Emeritus Professor of Semitic Languages in the University of Cardiff; and the Revd Dr E. L. Allen, Lecturer in Theology and Religious Knowledge in the University of Durham.

These are all now gone to their rest, but the fruits of their co-operation live on as a challenge to those who, forty years later, in both Christian and Jewish communities, fight shy of any kind of inter-faith discussion or dialogue which can be said to have theological implications. I have always regarded it as one of real achievements of 'Oxford 1946' that among the preparatory papers was one jointly written by Rabbi Epstein and Dr Mattuck on 'The Social and Moral Postulates of Judaism', which opens with this paragraph:

The social and moral postulates of Judaism have to be deduced from practical laws and specific principles in the Torah. Behind the social and moral postulates lie two fundamental principles about human life. One is the fundamental value of human personality imparted to it by its relation with the Divine. In virtue of this relationship – a relationship which in its very essence is eternal – the individual can approach God; and even a sinner can find his way back to Him as Father; and the way of approach and return to God is ethical conduct in His name. The other is that a social group by conforming to the will of God and by following ethical principles in its corporate life establishes itself in the right relation to God.

The remarkable thing about this, it seems to me, is less its content than its joint authorship. Is it too much to hope that the sense of realism and responsibility which forty years ago made such collaboration possible may reassert itself in these no less critical times in which we find ourselves today?

So from preliminaries and preparations we come to the conference itself. There were in all 150 participants of whom about one third were part-timers only. Of the full total about half were British. Forty came from the United States while the rest, in small groupings, came from Australia, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, Germany, Holland, South Africa, Sweden and Switzerland. There were also two from Palestine, as it then was. The temptation to pause over individual names must be resisted. I mention only three. The first, at this time of grave anxiety about South Africa, must be Alan Paton whose book, *Cry the Beloved Country*, was just about to be published. The other two came from Germany: Pastor Herman Maas and Probst Gruber, whose names and services to the Jewish community during the Nazi regime were later to be commemorated by trees planted in the Avenue of Righteous Gentiles at Yad Vashem, the Holocaust memorial in Jerusalem.

The conference was formally opened with a public meeting in London on the evening of 29 July. Greatly daring, as we thought, we had booked the large meeting hall at Friends House in Euston Road, which was capable of seating 1,100 people. It turned out that our problem was not how to make a small audience look larger but how to cope with the overflow. On the platform we had the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Geoffrey Fisher, as Chairman, and with him Viscount Reading, R.A. (later to become Lord) Butler, Basil O'Connor, Reinhold Niebuhr, and Leo Baeck, whose first appearance it was at a public gathering since his arrival in this country after his release from Theresienstadt.

Those were the days before the advent of the now universal tape recorder and we have no detailed record of what was said that evening. Two things only I can mention. I recently learned from a friend in the United States that he had discovered that Reinhold Niebuhr mentioned the situation in Palestine. What he said my friend has not yet discovered, but the Niebuhr archives may eventually provide an answer. I mention the matter simply because I think it important to recall that at the time the situation in Palestine was one of considerable tension. My own vivid recollection of this centres around the fact that I had been invited by the BBC to conduct the broadcast service on the morning of Sunday, 28 July, and, in the course of my sermon, to say something about the nature and purpose of the conference. My task was not made easier by the fact that on the previous Thursday the King David Hotel in Jerusalem was blown up by the Irgun (a Jewish, right-wing, underground military organization) with heavy loss of life.

The other thing I must mention about the opening meeting was the deep impression created by the presence of Rabbi Leo Baeck. I cannot remember what he said, but his very presence on the platform, his body still bearing the marks of the privations he had endured in the concentration camp, and his voice, as he spoke in what was still his unaccustomed English, bore witness to the actualities of the Holocaust and their challenge to the heart and mind of the conference more eloquently than anything else could have done.

It was the same when we came to Oxford where Dr Baeck was a member of Commission Two, which produced the Fundamental Postulates Declaration. Of Baeck's participation in the work of the group Professor Grensted, its Chairman, wrote that he brought to it

the learning and that dignity beyond all learning which only a great experience can give. Dr Baeck spoke to us very little, and always with effect, but his presence among us. . .gave reality to all that we said. This is the true background against which our memoranda and our documents must be read.

Our first task on arriving at Oxford was to constitute the membership of the commission that was to deal with Group Tensions, a commission that was in some sense to provide an overall framework into which eventually the work of the other commissions must needs be fitted. If the warning with which its report begins, that 'hate is an evil which affects mankind as a whole' sounds like just another glimpse of the obvious, it is not to be lightly dismissed as irrelevant in age which, forty years later, is still in the grip of that same evil, which is very far from having been eradicated. At that time great hopes were being pinned upon the United Nations, whose Charter had just been adopted, and it was perhaps not altogether surprising that the conference should have gone on to urge that those principles of the Charter which are directed towards 'the promotion and encouragement of respect for human rights and fundamental freedom for all, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion' should be written into the peace treaties which were then being drafted.

There was no question, however, of unloading responsibility only on to other people and institutions, and two very practical proposals were made by this commission. The first urged that a permanent international organization of Christians and Jews be set up, and the second that a conference on antisemitism in Europe be called 'at the earliest possible moment'. The fact that this second recommendation took the best part of a year to implement in no way detracts from the importance of what came to be known as 'Seelisberg 1947', the fortieth anniversary of which the International Council of Christians and Jews plans to celebrate in Switzerland next year.

I must not stray too far into what in 1946 was the future, but since the Seelisberg Conference was so specifically an outcome of its Oxford predecessor it is apposite to recall that the Message to the Churches issued by that conference, and its Ten Points for the guidance of preachers and teachers in the presentation of the Jewish background of Christianity and of the stories in the Passion and Crucifixion of Christ played a not unimportant part in preparing the way for subsequent statements to the same effect by successive assemblies of the World Council of Churches, and eventually by the second Vatican Council in its *Nostra Aetate* declaration of 1965. Though the disease is far from having been

completely eradicated, there can be little doubt that much progress has been made in identifying and coping with it since our meeting here in Oxford forty years ago.

The first of the two recommendations, that steps be taken to set up an international council of Christians and Jews, took longer to carry out and gave rise to a number of difficulties that were certainly not foreseen at Oxford. That story must be for another time, but I am happy to confirm that the ICCJ, which finally emerged in its present form some ten years ago, is in good heart, with member organizations of Christians and Jews in twenty countries and its headquarters firmly established, with the goodwill and very practical help of the civic and Church authorities in West Germany, in the house in Heppenheim in which Martin Buber lived for twenty-two years, commuting regularly between the Universities of Heidelberg and Frankfurt, before leaving for Jerusalem in 1938 as a refugee from Nazi persecution.

Of Commission Two and its Statement on the Fundamental Postulates of Judaism and Christianity I have already said sufficient, I hope, to encourage the thought that it is far from being a dead letter and that there is material here not merely for research but for current exploration and application.

The nature of freedom and its enjoyment was, of course, one of the leitmotifs of the conference. The particular study of it entrusted to Commission Three was focused upon Religious Liberty. We were after all a gathering of religiously motivated people whose differing backgrounds and traditions had in the past frequently brought them into conflict with each other. If we were to find a sure basis for a better future it must be with due regard for the principles of the particular form of freedom which, it was recognized, must have far-reaching implications. There were, moreover, specific problems in this field directly as a result of antisemitism and the war situation, particularly in respect of Jewish children and young people who had been either orphaned or separated from their parents and families. Many had been entrusted to the care of Christian foster-parents or guardians, some of whom had been over-zealous in their interpretation of the religious implications of that responsibility and had sought to convert the children in their care from their parental faith to that of their guardians. I hasten to add that every care was taken by the organizations responsible for the welfare of such children, but in the face of such present need and of the long and sorry history of Christian attempts to bring about the conversion of Jews by the use of methods which were in themselves a manifest negation of the principles inherent in Christian faith and practice, it was felt to be a matter of some urgency that these and similar problems should be tackled by the Conference.

The opening paragraph of the commission's report insisted that 'religious freedom can be fully realized only in proportion as men cease to fear, hate and suspect those who differ from them in religious faith', and if that seems like yet another glimpse of the obvious let me remind you of the conditions obtaining today no further away than in Northern Ireland, and, less violently, in some of the mutual attitudes to be found even here in this land of ours. Indeed, I have often felt

as I have reflected upon the more detailed contents of this report, that it contains guide-lines which might have been found relevant by the Government of Israel, for example, when it felt itself some few years ago constrained to adopt legislation directed against the activities of Christian missionaries there, and more recently by the CCJ in this country, which has been under pressure to issue statements on the missionary activities of some Christian evangelists seeking to convert Jews to Christianity.

The Commission on Justice and its Claims was invited to consider those claims in relation to the social, economic and political aspects of the life both of the individual and the community. From this, as indeed from the whole nature and purpose of the conference, it is clear that we were in no way inhibited from what many people even today appear to regard as the heresy of mixing religion and politics. Indeed it could be argued that this was precisely the object of the exercise. We had just emerged from a cataclysm which bore eloquent testimony to the inability of politicians by themselves to achieve any significant improvement in the human condition. Nor had we any illusions as to the ability of religious leaders alone to succeed where politicians and indeed economists and social workers had failed. The hope that brought us to Oxford was that some progress might be made in the direction of an ordered relationship, rather than a separation, between politics and religion. With some of us that hope still survives. It is, in fact, a hope enshrined in the concluding paragraph of the Statement of Fundamental Postulates, which reads:

Man's recognition of himself and of his neighbour as children of God should issue in a charity and righteousness which, while but imperfectly embodied in the forms and laws of organized society, work to transform them into an ever more adequate expression. We, therefore, Christians and Jews alike, call upon all who share the religious convictions and ethical principles here set out to co-operate for the realization of this ideal.

Commissions Five and Six were concerned principally with practical proposals as to how best to implement the principles adumbrated by the other commissions and through what channels. They were the kind of proposals that form part of most conference reports and I do not think we need stay over them.

There was, however, a seventh Commission which we set up shortly after our arrival in Oxford. This, as I mentioned earlier, was a Youth Commission, comprising in the main a group of students who formed part of the American delegation together with a few British students who had joined the conference. One of these, by the way, was Geoffrey Wigoder, whose name is now well known throughout the Jewish and non-Jewish world, not least for his work as Editor-in-Chief of the *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, and as a member of the Planning Committee of the Museum of the Jewish Diaspora (Beth Hatefutsoth) in Tel Aviv.

There was no question of the meetings of this group conflicting with the already programmed meetings of the six main commissions into which these younger

members, along with all the other members of the conference, had been drafted, and in which they played a full, active and stimulating part. This was a work of supererogation which involved meeting late in the evening and talking on, as I discovered for myself, into the early hours of the morning. They chose as their theme 'Group Unity', and if some of the issues they tackled were not greatly dissimilar from those raised in the other commissions, the freshness and enthusiasm with which they presented their findings made a deep impression on the conference. They ended their report with a characteristically forward-looking and challenging paragraph:

In conclusion, attacks against group prejudice must be made at every level and through every means available. Group unity is bound up with a spirit of fellowship and with a sense of the Brotherhood of Man under God. Peace and security will never come to the world until a man, regardless of his creed and colour, can put down his foot anywhere in the world and say 'this is my home'.

We are still a long way from having achieved that order of group unity, I fear. They were thinking of refugees and displaced persons in an immediately post-war situation, and I cannot help wondering what would have been their reaction to some of our current 'frontier' problems both inside and between countries and groups – even, perhaps, to our hippie 'peace column' here in southern England. Maybe they would have wanted to add a further sentence to the effect that whoever happens to have established his claim already should stretch out his hand and say, 'Welcome, brother; make yourself at home.' And we are a long way from that, too, I fear.

But we press on. I am happy to be able to report that, since Oxford, we have held a number of international youth leadership conferences for Christians and Jews in Austria, France, Germany, Great Britain, Holland, Israel and Switzerland. The latest in the series will take place in Jerusalem at the end of the present year. And always we try to focus attention on some current local problems in the light of our Judaeo-Christian heritage.

Finally, I come to an aspect of 'Oxford 1946' which, though I have reserved it to the end, I believe to be of outstanding importance in relation to all our activities in this field of Jewish-Christian relations. As Christians and Jews we are joint heirs, not only to those moral and ethical principles which constitute the foundations of our civilization, but also to a like acknowledgement of our common dependence upon One and (since we both affirm that there is only One) the same God, whom we are called to worship and to serve, to love and to enjoy. Sadly, what ought surely to be the focal point of our association, both in work and in dialogue, has remained an embarrassing point of separation, not only between Jews and Christians but even between Christians and Christians and between Jews and Jews.

Our conference here in Oxford included a weekend. *Prima facie* this presented no problem. There was an open invitation to all who wished to attend a service in the Synagogue on Shabbat. Nor was it a problem for a member of any Christian Church to find a spiritual home on Sunday in this 'city of dreaming spires'. But there were some members of both communities in the conference who expressed a desire for some form of joint service. It is a desire that has been echoed many times since in gatherings of Christians and Jews, and we are still a long way from having found a universally acceptable answer. It may be a long time before we do. But here in the chapel of Lady Margaret Hall, a chapel ideally suited to our purpose, a small group of us gathered on the Sunday morning for a period of meditation and reflection for the conduct of which we invited Canon Grensted to be responsible.

I think none who were present will ever forget the almost electrifying effect of the way in which the Professor eventually broke the welcome silence into which, after so much talking in the days that had gone before, we had relapsed. He did so, not with words of his own, but with the quiet recitation of these lines of Henry Vaughan, the seventeenth-century English mystic:

I saw Eternity the other night
Like a great Ring of pure and endless light,
All calm as it was bright;
And round beneath it, Time, in hours, days, years,
Driven by the spheres,
Like a vast shadow moved, in which the world
And all her train were hurled.

Suddenly, we who had been busy for hours and days, some of us for years, wrestling with the consequences of a global war and a holocaust that had shocked us to the very depths of our beings, and who were now committing ourselves with a deep sense of responsibility to the awesome task of seeking to rebuild upon foundations of freedom and justice, saw ourselves and what we were attempting in a totally new perspective. We were no longer creatures only of Time, driven like a vast shadow, in hours, days, and years. We belonged to an eternal order of pure and endless light, struggling and working still, but with a new sense of purpose and hope. It was, as some might say, 'just one of those moments'. But such moments have a meaning and validity out of all proportion to their duration in terms of what we call time.

Thank you for letting me share these memories with you tonight. The way by which we have reached our present vantage point has not been easy, but I am sure it has been the right one. We have learned much from our own and other people's mistakes, and I doubt not there are many difficulties still to be faced. But I take courage from some words of Geoffrey Fisher who, as Archbishop of Canterbury, took the chair at that opening meeting of the conference at Friends House on 29 July 1946.

In a difficult world where problems are endless and where many are hard to solve and some are apparently insoluble without a change of heart, we as Christians and Jews bear witness in faith and hope to that which can change the hearts of men: the principles which God has made for men, and apart from which there can be no civilization.

The endowment of the annual Sacks Lectures at the Oxford Centre for Postgraduate Hebrew Studies was a gift from the friends of Dr Samuel Sacks and the late Dr Elsie Sacks in Honour of their fiftieth wedding anniversary.

William W. Simpson, OBE, MA, started his career as a Methodist minister with a special interest in Jews and Judaism which began during his student days in Cambridge. In 1938 he became the first secretary of the newly established Christian Council for Refugees from Germany and Central Europe, from which he moved in 1942 to become the first secretary of the British Council of Christians and Jews, a post in which he served for more than thirty years. He is now Honorary Life Vice-President of the International Council of Christians and Jews.