Community and the Individual

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I first conceived of this essay in wake of a competition, some eight years ago, calling upon people to suggest ideas for an "important Jewish book." Having written, for a number of years, a paper on the weekly Torah portion—with a different theme each year—I found myself asking the question: Were I given the opportunity, including time and money, to write a book, what would I write about? What is the central message that I feel Judaism has to give to the world at this historical junction? This essay constitutes my answer.

The Problem

Throughout the twentieth century, much of Western Jewry enthusiastically embraced modernity and all it has to offer, attempting to harmonize Jewish identity with modernity and accepting many of its central values and ways of thinking. Yet historically, Jews have always been, and have thought of themselves as, "nay-sayers." A well-known midrash derives Abraham's name, *Avraham Ha-ivri* ("Abraham the Hebrew"), from the idea that "the whole world was on one side (*mei-eiver eḥad*) and he was on the other."[1] Thus, the very first Jew is portrayed as the archetypal non-conformist, as one who did not fear to criticize and call to account things that were done improperly in the world. Jews said no to Canaanite paganism; to the Hellenistic culture of late antiquity; to medieval European Christianity; and, as

Maurice Samuels persuasively argues in *The Gentleman and the Jew*,[2] to the culture of warfare, colonialism, militarism, and the celebration of combat sports and the hunt that "trained" for these pursuits, which have characterized much of European and English history.

The question that arises is: What phenomena in today's world call for "nay-saying"? Of course, there are many things that call for refutation on every level in economic, cultural, and political life, in the United States, in Israel, and elsewhere. These include, most strikingly, the very real threats to the environment, which in recent years have been dramatically manifested in frightening signs of world climate change; and the ongoing threat of nuclear warfare, with which we have "learned to live" for a half-century or more, but which constitutes no less a potential mortal threat to our civilization.

But there is another phenomenon that stands out in my mind, one that I have observed over my adult lifetime (roughly speaking, since the mid-1960s) that, while less immediately cataclysmic than the two mentioned above, nevertheless represents a very serious threat to the ongoing life of society; and is one so obvious that it is often overlooked. I refer to the decline of the sense of society, of community, and the rise of individualism, at times in extreme form.

I believe that in recent years a kind of extreme individualism has emerged as the covert ideology of much of Western society, with a corresponding decline in community values and in what has been called "social capital." This is a problem that urgently needs to be addressed; I see this struggle as a central focus of the Jewish call for *tikkun olam*, for attempting to rectify the faults of the world in which we live. In the second half of this essay, I will discuss the manner in which Judaism provides certain answers or alternative models to this problem, in the form of a proper balance between individual and society.

Decline in Communal Values: Examples from Current Life

During the past half-century, I have observed a series of changes in the social world in which we live, all of them pointing in the direction of greater emphasis on the individual and a concomitant decline in community values.[3] If at times I shall engage below in overly sweeping generalizations, I offer my apologies. Notwithstanding certain exceptions, I believe that my description of the overall trends is nevertheless a correct one. A few examples:

Marriage and Sexuality: The past half-century has been marked by a series of dramatic changes related to family and sexuality: (a) an unprecedented rise in the incidence of divorce in Western society; (b) the so-called "sexual revolution"—that is, the widespread acceptance of premarital intercourse as a behavioral norm among the educated middle class in Western countries among all but the most traditional religious circles (including Protestants, Catholics, and Jews alike); (c) the widespread acceptance and legitimation of homosexual behavior; and (d) the emergence of a powerful feminist movement (the so-called "Second Wave"), many of whose norms have been widely accepted among the educated classes in the West. All of these phenomena, taken in aggregate, indicate a radical change in attitudes toward sexuality and the family, whose common denominator might be described as thinking about sexuality in individualistic terms: that is, as a basic human need and source of pleasure for the individual, rather than as a basis for marriage and for the family (which serves as the smallest and most basic unit of society, and as a normative framework for procreation and raising the next generation). Some have described these changes in terms of the privatization of sex or, in religious terms, as the desanctification of relations between men and women.

There are, admittedly, many positive aspects to these changes. First and foremost, perhaps, are the positive changes in the role of women in society generally, and greater opportunities for women in the professions. The de facto legitimation of homosexual behavior has served as a liberating change for gay people, who have hitherto lived dual lives, in shame and secrecy. More generally, the frankness and honesty regarding sexuality and the open discussion of sexual issues in today's society may be seen in positive terms. But there is also a downside to many of these developments: by severing the connection between sexuality and morality, by declaring any consensual relation between two people as legitimate, the sense of awe has been removed from the sexual act. Moreover, the very possibility of raising ethical issues concerning sexuality in public discourse has been nullified. In addition, certain schools of feminism have fostered the idea of relations between sexes as largely combative rather than cooperative, leading to a new "war of the sexes." The emphasis on women as individuals has tended to undermine the family unit—the very smallest social unit, which as such functions as the basis of society. Divorce has become so widespread as to have become almost normative, causing the breakup of large numbers of families—often unnecessarily—and with dire results to these families' children during their most impressionable years. In my understanding, taken together these changes in the nature of the family constitute a threat to the cohesion and viability of society as a whole.

Economic: On the economic level, there has been a resurgence of capitalism, in the form of globalization or "neo-liberalism." Capitalism, as a philosophy, sees the human being first and foremost as homo economicus: its core belief is the notion that the profit motive, the desire for wealth, is the basic motivation of all human activity. Margaret Thatcher expressed this idea succinctly in her oft-repeated statement that "There is no such thing as society, only individuals." Hence the culture of capitalism emphasizes competition rather than cooperation. Over recent decades we have seen the decline of the

welfare state, a process of privatization, and an increasingly harsh economic environment. This change has been pronounced in the State of Israel, which over the past forty years has been transformed from one of the more economically egalitarian countries in the world to one of the least so. Moreover, in recent decades there has emerged a pattern, in high-power, high-paying professions such as law and technology, in which people are expected to work twelve- and fourteen-hour days. There is an expectation of total devotion to one's career, fueled by a covert acceptance of the notion that career and high income are the highest values in society. This ethos is one of the factors that contribute directly to delayed marriage, as well as to a decline in family life and in the ability of parents to spend substantial time with their children. (Sabbath observance among traditional Jews serves to counter these forces somewhat, but is not in itself sufficient to stem the socio-economic forces confronting families in the twenty-first century.)

Legal Theory: The emphasis on individuality has affected legal discourse as well. The discourse of individual rights, praiseworthy in itself, tends to emphasize the rights of special groups or of individuals, with a corresponding rejection or reduction in the notion of social responsibility. For example: some years ago Israel considered adopting a "Good Samaritan Law," under which, among other things, bystanders would be required to attend to a person who had been injured in an accident. Surprisingly, several secular left-wing Knesset members, whom one would have expected to back such a proposal, were troubled by the idea of society imposing a legal responsibility of this sort on individuals, even in such a drastic case; it was perceived by them to constitute a violation of individual liberty.[4]

Spirituality: In recent decades there has been a renewal of interest in spirituality, often referred to by the phrase "New Age"—something which, as a religious person, I cannot but see as praiseworthy. However, the emphasis of this movement tends to be on the individual and his or her own personal, subjective experience. Thus, for example: Pesaḥ

is reinterpreted as the individual being freed from one's own personal Egypt, Shavuot as focused on accepting one's own personal Torah, and so forth. (Admittedly, this approach does have roots in Judaism—particularly in Hasidism, where such ideas originally flourished, albeit in a very different context.) In the current context, these trends seem to express a kind of post-modernist relativism, downplaying both *halakhah* and Jewish covenantal, collective existence.

Historical Consciousness: My own admittedly subjective impression is that an increasing number of people no longer feel themselves part of any historical continuum. The idea of historical continuity is, as we shall see below, a central idea in Judaism; indeed, it is a necessary component of any meaningful notion of cultural identity. This implicit rejection of history was strongly articulated by Existentialist thinkers, one of whose core ideas was that the only meaning of life is that which the individual—whose own purview is limited by his or her own birth and death—gives to it. I first encountered these ideas in my youth, and at the time was much impressed by them—largely because such central figures of the movement as Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus behaved quite heroically during World War II in the anti-Nazi underground in France. But, upon closer examination, I came to believe that these ideas are highly problematic; moreover, they can be equally used in support of fascism and other questionable moral position.

New Technology: On the concrete, practical level, much of the new technology separates people from one another. This trend already began with television, but it has been greatly exacerbated by personal computers, smart phones, the internet, and various forms of social media, whose ubiquity seems to have created a society in which people are increasingly isolated from one another, with less and less face-to-face contact and more and more contact by electronic means. I submit that such modern technological innovations, useful as they may be (and at times even necessary, for example in facilitating communication between people separated by great distances), cannot

substitute for the depth and intimacy possible through face-to-face contact between people.

Causes of this Decline

What has led to this change? And is it really such a bad thing? To a great extent, the swing of the pendulum toward individualism is an understandable reaction to the exaggerated emphasis on community and the collectivity that characterized the period preceding the present one. The first half of the twentieth century was characterized, inter alia, by such totalitarian movements as communism, fascism, and Nazism, all of which regimented society, disregarded the value of the individual, and engaged in mass murder when it allegedly served collective aims. (Such tendencies can still be found today in societies such as North Korea, in which the individual is seen as existing to serve the state or its ideology; and it appears to me that there may be a similar mood in Islamic radicalism.) Indeed, a great deal of the attractiveness of such radical movements is that they provide individuals with a powerful sense of purpose, of *esprit de corps*, and of a meaning in life found by sharing in a cause greater than themselves.

Even Zionism (which as such could hardly be called a totalitarian movement) made great demands upon the individual during the early years of the State, when the newly-created State of Israel was engaged in collective tasks such as absorbing hundreds of thousands of immigrants, creating state institutions, and building an economy—all this while fighting for its very survival. Indeed, even the literature and popular music of that period reflected those concerns. But at a certain point, perhaps in the 1960s or early 1970s, many Israelis began to ask themselves: when can I live for *myself*? Such prominent leaders as the late Shulamit Aloni began to raise human rights as a political issue, while fiction authors such as Amos Oz and A. B. Yehoshua began to write in a more personal vein. Today, in marked

contrast to earlier societal tendencies, there is a growing trend in Israeli culture toward privatism and individualism.

But radical individualism runs the very real risk of ignoring certain central human values. Such values as kindness, generosity, and helping others—known in Hebrew as *ḥesed*—are predicated on human beings living within community, and can as such only be actualized within the context of society. At least in its extreme form, individualism leaves little or no room for *ḥesed*: when one lives for oneself alone, acts of charity are conceived of as private, purely voluntary acts, rather than as moral obligations incumbent upon each individual by virtue of being a human. Indeed, the moral concept of responsibility toward others is premised on the concept of society as the natural state of humanity. It is this concept that lies at the root of the controversy within American society surrounding such issues as governmental involvement in social welfare, even concerning such basic areas as education or health.

Individualism

What is the basic idea of individualism? In a word, it is the idea that the proper focus of life—the central criterion of determining value—is the welfare and happiness of the individual human being.

Some scholars find the roots of individualism in Christianity, which was founded as a religion based upon a redemptive message of salvation of the individual soul, and which converted individuals in line with this theology. (In this respect it differed from Judaism which, as I shall discuss in detail below, is based upon community, and upon a covenant between a specific family-become-nation and its God; conversion to Judaism involves symbolic adoption or even rebirth as a Jew.) But by the Middle Ages, the Christian Church had grown to function as an all-embracing community, so that the

emergence of Protestantism in the sixteenth century revived the focus of religious life upon the individual.

From the Renaissance on we find increasing expressions of the individual in Western culture and literature: Cervantes, in *Don Quixote*, writes of an eccentric individual who pursues his own vision, "tilting at windmills"; Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* may be seen as a paradigm of the lone individual who survives entirely on his own; the philosopher René Descartes coined the phrase *Cogito ergo sum* ("I think, therefore I am"), pinpointing the essence of humanness in the process of thought, which is by definition an individual process; John Stuart Mill's essay *On Liberty* celebrates the autonomy and freedom of the individual. In America, the "conquest of the West" during the nineteenth century was largely a movement of individuals or small family units moving West in covered wagons, each one establishing itself on its own homestead, expressing what came to be called "rugged Yankee individualism."

Closer to our own period, the emergence of modern capitalism coincided with the ideas of individual initiative, the myth of the "self-made man," and the notion that the capitalist system allowed each individual to realize his or her full potential, if one but worked hard enough. These ideas found extreme expression, for example, in such novels as Ayn Rand's *The Fountainhead* and *Atlas Shrugged*.[5]

The problem is a difficult one on several levels. On a practical level, the growth of individualism is the result of deeply-rooted factors in modern society, beginning with urbanization and persisting in light of such economic changes as the domination of the economy by huge, anonymous corporations, creating a sense of alienation on the part of the individual worker or consumer. All these macro-societal factors make a return to the old-fashioned type of intimate community, such as that of the pre-modern village, all but impossible.

On the level of values: just as an excessive emphasis on individualism creates the problems mentioned above, an excessive emphasis on

the collective, with its concomitant suppression of individual rights and identity, presents its own dangers, as mentioned above. Hence, the solution cannot be a return to all-embracing societies of the type that existed in the past—and certainly not to the totalitarian models of the mid-twentieth century, which governed and dictated, often in oppressive ways, the lifestyle, values, and life patterns of the individual. Rather, the goal toward which we ought to strive is a happy medium between individualism and vital community life. There is need for a new approach that, while allowing wide latitude for individual differences, will mitigate the alienation and anomie resulting from the dissolution of society and social cohesion that is so pervasive within contemporary Western culture.

One may find examples of tightly-knit, highly supportive communities within the Jewish religious world. Examples of this are to be found, in very different ways, in many West Bank settlements, and in the Haredi (ultra-Orthodox) world—but in both cases demanding conformity to a very specific set of norms. While I do not agree with the political ideology of the West Bank settlers' movement, I admire their passion—which is related to the fact that they have in many places created a rich community life in a new type of communal settlement, the *yishuv k'hillati*, which has perhaps overcome some of the failings of the kibbutz movement. Thus, part of the sadness felt as a result of the 2005 evacuation of Jewish settlements in the Gaza Strip was the breakup of such communities and the relocation of the families to new places—without the communal fabric, institutions, and friendships that had given them great support.

Community

One of the buzzwords of contemporary social criticism is "alienation," which is seen as one of the diseases of modern mass, anonymous

society. Already in the early twentieth century many people began writing about the anomie felt by the individual in mass society, in urban settings in which neighbors do not know one another. The revival of a sense of community, which is of course no simple matter, would help to solve or ameliorate this problem.

In the late nineteenth century, the German sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies wrote a book entitled *Gemeinschaft* und *Gesellschaft* ("Community and Society"),[6] in which he drew a contrast between two differing kinds of societal organization: the intimate community, marked by living human interaction, and the anonymous, mechanized big city, in which relations among people are instrumental, based upon formal rules.

In recent decades, a communitarian movement has grown in the United States, which has developed a critique of the above-mentioned exaggerated individualism.[7] This movement is neither "Right" nor "Left" in the classic sense. Rather, it focuses upon what it calls the "loss of social capital"—that is, the disintegration of social structures, including such voluntary organizations as the PTA, church groups, or even bowling leagues (hence the title of one popular book on the subject, *Bowling Alone*)—which brought people together, in earlier times.[8] The movement notes the disconnection of people from one another, resulting in harm both to society and to the individual's emotional (and even physical) health by the breaking of these bonds—and issues a call for the renewal of such groups.

Michael Lerner, editor of *Tikkun* magazine, has made an interesting observation related to this point.[9] He notes that liberals in the U.S. are often critical of those who speak of "family values," who generally advocate a conservative approach toward such issues as abortion and homosexuality. However, Lerner asserts that such people are largely motivated by their longing for a sense of lost community. He argues that the competitive values of the marketplace promote selfishness and materialism, undermining our capacities to

sustain loving relationships; therefore, families need to be embedded in communities that unabashedly affirm the value of love and solidarity.

I find it significant, and more than a little disappointing, that the communitarian literature points specifically to various places in southeast Asia (such as Singapore, the Philippines, and Taiwan) as models for strongly community-oriented societies, whereas Jewish communities are not mentioned in this context—certainly not those of Jews living in Western countries, nor those in contemporary Israel. There is a certain anomaly here, as in principle Judaism is strongly rooted in the idea of community. However, today this is no longer the case—at least not in practice—for the Jews in U.S. and other Western diasporas. Jews have been extremely successful in the United States in business, in the professions, in media, and in the academic world; many Jews like to cite the disproportionate number of Nobel Prize winners among Jews. But all these accomplishments have been of an individual nature. Why is this so? Because Jews, for numerous reasons, have largely assimilated into Western society (in some cases even trying to conceal their Jewishness) and, in the process, have thrown off much of traditional Judaism, including its strong communal structure, adopting instead a Western individualistic approach to life.

Judaism and Community

Notwithstanding, I submit that Judaism has important things to say about our problem. Traditional Judaism recognizes the importance of both the individual and the community, fostering insights that may prove fruitful to our own age.

Judaism—as a religion, as a literature, as a system of thought—greatly values community; indeed, it is based upon it.[10] One needn't

search far to prove this point. The central idea in Judaism, the covenant between God and the people Israel, which lies at the heart of the Sinai revelation, is based upon a collective covenant between God and the people. In similar fashion, the major festivals revolve around community and peoplehood. Shavuot celebrates the covenant with the community; see the verse regarding the Sinai revelation, "you shall be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Exodus 19:6); Passover signifies the birth of the nation, celebrated by the consumption in extended family groups of the paschal lamb, the sacrificial ritual upon which the modern *seder* meal is modeled; and so on.

Even a key individual ritual such as *b'rit milah*, circumcision, by which each male individual is initiated into Judaism shortly after birth, is conceived in communal terms. In recent public disputes about circumcision—in San Francisco, in Germany, in other places in Europe—the argument has been made that an infant child "has no religion." But this argument is predicated on the assumption that religion is a function of personal belief, which by definition can only apply to a person with an ability to think, choose, and formulate a worldview—which an infant clearly cannot do. But from a traditional Jewish perspective, the Jewishness of the individual begins as part of a collective identity, in a communal covenant—and only later, and in a supplementary way that does not displace this earlier aspect, does it become a personal commitment. Similarly marriage, which as such is a union between two individuals, is celebrated in Judaism in a communal fashion.

The famous rabbinic dictum concerning the "three things upon which the world stands"—Torah, religious devotion or worship, and acts of lovingkindness[11]—may similarly be interpreted with both individual and communal emphases. One can pray alone, one can study by oneself, one can perform individual deeds of kindness by oneself, even anonymously. But all three can, and often are, performed in community—and are arguably enhanced thereby.

The study of Torah is often conducted through fixed public study sessions, while the *beit midrash*, the study house, is a central public institution. *Yeshivot*, autonomous study institutions devoted wholly to study, are likewise collective bodies.

Regarding prayer: the *minyan*, symbolically representative of an entire community, is seen as essential for public worship. The Talmud contains an interesting dispute between Rabbi Yossi ben Ḥanina and Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi concerning the nature and origin of the three daily prayers: are they rooted in the personal prayer of the three patriarchs, or in the daily sacrifices? I believe that at the heart of this dispute is a debate as to whether prayer is essentially an individual act or a communal one. Is its essence the subjective, individual experience, the "service of the heart" rooted in the emotional life of the individual, which is by definition located within each person's psyche? Or is it quintessentially a public act of the community standing before God, serving the Almighty as a collective?

Regarding the practice of *ḥesed* (lovingkindness) in community: traditionally, Jewish communities have established *ḥevrot*, societies for the organized practice of *ḥesed*, of providing for the needy—be it marrying off indigent brides, providing interest-free loans to the needy, visiting the sick, burying the dead, or providing food and clothing for the needy. I have had the good fortune to have been personally involved in two communities in which the practice of *ḥesed* was of central importance. In one, that of the late Bostoner Rebbe (Rabbi Levi I. Horowitz) in Brookline, Massachusetts, the practice of hospitality (*hakhnasat or'ḥim*), of inviting Shabbat guests to one's home week in and week out, encouraged and often organized by the community, was a fact of everyday life. Another community, a Shabbat *minyan* in Jerusalem, exemplified dedication to the ongoing care of seriously ill members of the congregation. Whenever a person took sick, a group of people would gathered in his or her home every Shabbat afternoon, to visit, to talk with him or her, to study Torah, and to pray.

Even such inner psychological and spiritual processes as *t'shuvah* (repentance) and *kapparah* (atonement), which lie at the heart of the High Holy Days, have strong collective or communal elements. Yom Kippur is celebrated in community, in mass confession and prayer for forgiveness, all of which are phrased in the plural. We also recall the ancient ceremony of the *se'ir ha-mishtalei·aḥ*, the "scape goat" sent into the wilderness, which served as an instrument of collective atonement, without any specific individual acts of *t'shuvah*.

On the other hand, there is great importance attached to the individual in Jewish tradition. An important passage in the Mishnah describes the warning delivered to witnesses in a criminal case, stressing the value of the individual life:

> How does one chasten the witnesses in capital cases [so as not to impose the death penalty too lightly]? One says: … Therefore the first human being was created alone, to teach you that whoever destroys a single individual [from Israel] is considered by Scripture as if they had destroyed the entire world; and whoever sustains one soul [from Israel] is considered by Scripture as if they had sustained the entire world.
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> An additional reason [that humanity was created with a single person] is for the sake of peace among people, so that a person will not say to another: "My father was greater than your father." And so that the heretics not say: "There are many dominions in heaven." And to teach the greatness of the blessed Holy One: for a human being makes several coins with one seal, and all of them are similar to one another; but the King of Kings, the blessed Holy One, makes every person in the seal of the first Adam, and yet not one of them is similar to any other one. Therefore each person must say: "For me the world was created."[13]

Aviva Zornberg, in her book, *Genesis: The Beginning of Desire*,[14] notes that the human being is the only creature who lives in the tension of a dual nature—both horizontal and vertical. She sees humankind's standing erect as symbolizing its domination, related to its individuation, in contrast to "the swarm"—the "horizontal spread" of the other creatures who lack this consciousness, and who are driven solely by the instinct to proliferate, to "swarm"—that is, the automatic, instinctual drive for biological life.

Underlying the importance of the individual is the concept that the consciousness, the intellect, is located in the individual mind, which is the seat of the religious awareness of the individual. Hence, such philosophical views as that of Maimonides, who sees the ultimate goal of the religious life as knowledge of God,[15] perceive the individual as central. The same holds true, in a different way, for mystical schools; while they have very different cognitive contents, they are also ultimately concerned with the function of soul/spiritual consciousness.

Conclusion

The above is a very brief presentation of what can and should be said about this vital subject. My purpose here has been to describe the phenomenon of gradual decline of community. Unfortunately, I do not have any concrete program for dealing with this problem, but simply wished to issue a call for awareness of the problem.[16]

I wish to conclude with two brief comments. First, it is important to cultivate the growth of local communities—in synagogues, in small neighborhoods and settlements, and in various types of voluntary organizations, including political and social activist groups. (It should be noted that my emphasis on religious community should not be taken as implying that the "solution" lies specifically in that direction; there is a great deal of room for non-religious people to organize rich

community life around shared values of their own, whether political, social, cultural, or otherwise; I have simply written about what I know best.)

Secondly, community exists on the level of the macro as well as the micro. That is, beyond cultivating local, face-to-face communities, it is important for people to be aware that society is not some impersonal, cold, alienated entity, but rather that society as a whole may—and should—be transformed into something based upon rich human interaction among its members, and that it is important for the individual to identify in a positive way with society as a whole.

NOTES

[1] Cf. Bereishit Rabbah 42:8.
[2] Maurice Samuel, *The Gentleman and the Jew* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1950).
[3] On the growth of individualism in American life, see Christopher Lasch, *The Culture of Narcissism: American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1978).
[4] Note the controversy in Israel's Knesset concerning the Good Samaritan Law (5758/1998), discussed by Yair Eldan in his paper, "'You Shall Not Stand Over the Blood of Your Neighbor' as a Basis for Understanding and Dialogue between Religionists and Secularists in the State of Israel" (Hebrew), in *Akdamot* 17 (2001), pp. 7–37.
[5] On individualism, see, inter alia: Christian Eugene Ehrhardt, "Individualism" and Rudolph Christoph Eucken, "Individuality," in *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. James Hastings (Edinburgh: T & T Clark; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1914), vol. 7, pp. 218–225.
[6] Ferdinand Tönnies, *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* (Leipzig: Fues's Verlag, 1887); published in English as *Community and Civil Society*, ed. Jose Harris; trans., Jose Harris and Margaret Hollis (Cambridge [U.K.] and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).
[7] On the communitarian movement, see: *The Essential Communitarian Reader*, ed. Amitai Etzioni (Lanham, Boulder, New York, and Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield, 1998) and *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life*, eds. Robert n. Bellah et al. (1985; rpt. Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 2008), and cf. also Robert Putnam's book mentioned in the following note.
[8] Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000).
[9] See Michael Lerner, *The Politics of Meaning* (Boston: Addison Wesley, 1996); and idem, *The Left Hand of God* (San Francisco: Harper, 2006).
[10] On community in Judaism, see Jacob Neusner, *Fellowship in Judaism: The First Century and Today* (London: Valentine, Mitchell, 1963) and Mark Zborowski and Elizabeth Herzog, *Life Is with People: The Culture of the Shtetl* (1952; rpt. New York: Schocken, 1995).
[11] The Hebrew is *torah, avodah,* and *g'milut ḥasadim*; see Pirkei Avot 1:2.
[12] B. Berakhot 26b.
[13] M. Sanhedrin 4:5.
[14] Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1995, pp. 10–13.
[15] See, e.g., M. T. Hilkhot Melakhim 12:4, Hilkhot Talmud Torah 1:12, Hilkhot Teshuvah 8:10, etc.
[16] But see, e.g., Ron Wolfson, *Relational Judaism: Using the Power of Relationships to Transform the Jewish Community* (New York: Jewish Lights, 2013).