

October 24, 1932

7 Rev. Dr. Julian Morgenstern  
Hebrew Union College  
Cincinnati, Ohio  
U. S. A.

Dear Dr. Morgenstern:

My Helen and I congratulate you most warmly upon the completion of twentyfive years of service at the Hebrew Union College, and may we congratulate Mrs. Morgenstern also, who has endured with you the heat and the burden of the day! It is our hope and prayer that with God's will the years to come may abound in happiness and blessing to you and to Mrs. Morgenstern and your children, and grandchildren, and that the Hebrew Union College and Judaism may continue to benefit from your labor in the future, even as it has in the past.

I was glad to receive your letter of October 3, and to learn that the outlook for the year at H. U. C. is promising, and that the new students seem to be a very select group. I am very sorry not to be able to participate in this year's seminar on the war legislation in Deuteronomy but I shall find out the results next year, or before then if you find time to write about them to me. It is good to know that you are working on your article on the Samaritans again. I hope soon to finish the first draft of the to'eba paper.

The work here is going smoothly. There are five Fellows from various American and Canadian universities here, and in addition four others are taking the various courses offered. My two courses on the cultural history of Palestine and the topography of Transjordan are attended by all the students, and about half of them are taking Dr. Cumming's courses on the Religion of the Prophets and the Exegesis of the Psalms, for which he uses the English Bible. I have a seminar on the bible, attended by the Two Brothers Fellow from Yale, Dr. Stinespring, and we are reading Trito-Isaiah at the present time. Once a week we make trips to points of archaeological interest, having devoted most of our trips to southern Judaea thus far. Every Tuesday morning we examine sites in or immediately near Jerusalem.

These servants are now doing the work formerly performed by five in the School, and I dare say, at least as efficiently. In this way alone we have effected savings of twelve and a half pounds a month, - an item not to be sneezed at in our small budget. I am very fortunate in having "a first-class keeper of the Director of the School". One of the servants has been detached from the School staff to the Director's house, and we are paying personally her salary, and also her board bill. In a word the School is expending about fifteen pounds less a month for servants, housekeeper, and their upkeep, than in the last couple years.

Hans Kjaer, the director of the Danish expedition at Shilo, died a few weeks ago in the middle of the campaign. Fortunately the particular pieces of ground he had been working on were finished more or less.

I had been in close contact with him, and he had evidently reported to his committee in Denmark about my relationship with him. I received a telegram from Denmark asking me to continue the work, and take over the directorship of the expedition. I then received a long letter from Denmark, asking me to take charge, and advisedly giving me full and absolute authority over against the assistant-director Aage Schmidt, who is not capable of running an expedition. The instructions in the letter which conformed with my own interests was to work in the earlier levels, and try to ascertain when the Israelites came to Shilo. They also telegraphed to the Department of Antiquities proposing my name. In previous personal interviews with the assistant-director, I had agreed to help in any way possible, provided I could take the members of the School with me. I expected to have trouble with Schmidt, who is literally on the sheer edge of madness, and who personally owns a good portion of the site of Shilo. Père Vincent and Professor Alt advised me urgently not to go into the affair as long as Schmidt was on the premises. He is persona non grata with the Department of Antiquities here, and they will not even permit him to visit their offices. Some one had to take charge, and in as much as the American School had been cooperating through the loan of equipment, and through my visits, and in as much as I had been expressly requested to carry on in Kjaer's place, I agreed, and applied for a new permit. It was granted immediately by the Department of Antiquities, but there was a delay in getting it through the office of the High Commissioner. Meanwhile Schmidt was making life miserable for me, by demanding that we begin digging again without a permit. I refused, whereupon he said he would begin anyway. I could not send a policeman of Antiquities, Dr. L. A. Mayer, with whom I kept in close touch, informed me then unofficially, that if any digging was done, I would be held responsible. I immediately sent a special messenger to Shilo, and forbade Schmidt in strong language to do anything till I received the permit and could be present on the site. The day after, last Wednesday, the permit came. I got Dr. Cunniff, and we immediately drove out to Shilo. Schmidt met us, and announced that he had decided suddenly not to permit digging in the earlier levels, but despite his former agreement with me to devote all the rest of the time and money to working on ~~some churches~~ on the site. That was contrary to my instructions from Denmark, and my own interests and competence. He was going to permit me to dig a ditch here, and a hole there in the part of the hill where Kjaer had been digging, but forbade me to touch this spot and that wall, and so on. There were two courses left open to me. One to exercise my authority, have the man thrown off the premises, and work my own way, and in accordance with my instruction. That was impossible, because the man has moral and personal and property rights in Shilo, and he would have gone raving mad, literally insane. The other was to close the dig, - which I regretfully did. I returned to Jerusalem, and discussed the whole matter with the Director of Antiquities. He applauded my action, and unofficially requested me to keep the permit in my name, till the division of the finds previously made had taken place, and till some sort of a report had been written. He said he could not and would not have any dealings with Schmidt. I agreed to retain the permit, and explained clearly to Schmidt that no more digging was to go on this year. Meanwhile I have telegraphed to the Danish Committee, and to Dr. Ingholt of the American University of Beirut, who is their representative in Palestine.]

Your point of view with regard to cooperation of H. U. C. and H. U. in an archaeological campaign is now also mine. When I told Sukenik

that it was impossible for me to raise the money due to bad conditions in America, he told me that he had succeeded raising the money in Palestine. However, he no longer spoke of cooperation. I was furious, but didn't say anything to him. A couple of days later, however, Magnes and Schlössinger, were speaking to me again about cooperation in such matters between H. U. C. and H. U.. I told them that that cooperation didn't mean our furnishing the money and holding the bag, and that on that basis, I for one, speaking unofficially, did not care to cooperate any more in joint archaeological undertakings, although I was as ever, deeply interested in the H. U., and would continue to be. Meanwhile at their prodding, Sukenik has written me asking me to cooperate, but the whole matter has left a bad taste in my mouth, so to speak. I can't join Sukenik now anyway because of the School's being in session, and it is impossible to drag the entire School all the way up to El-Namme, - and I am glad to have the excuse.

Last Sunday we gave a big official tea for Dr. Cumming, and it was, I believe a nice affair. All the representative scholars, and heads of related institutions were here. The idea that a Jew cannot get along with the Christian scholars and ministers here in Jerusalem, which I hear was an opinion voiced as an objection to my appointment by one of my immediate predecessors, is nonsense. I am on very friendly terms with all of them, and my relations with Mr. Richmond, the Director of Antiquities, and with other members of the Department of Antiquities, are as nice as one could wish them to be. Naturally my relationship with the Jews is a most friendly one. There is no difficulty maintaining the proper balance. The Arab representative on the board of the Palestine Oriental Society, Barghuty Effendi, was also here. And Dr. Canaan, the prominent Syrian Christian-Arab, is cooperating as closely with me as with any of my predecessors. I find no difficulty maintaining the proper balance, and the necessary neutrality.

I am returning signed the ocлары check which accompanied your letter. Will you please turn it over to Mr. Maximon, as additional repayment on my student-debt. I had written to Mr. Mielziner to send such a check to Mr. Maximon for me, and had also written to him to send one half of the money allotted to me for traveling expenses, namely \$700 to me care of my mother-in-law, and to send the other \$700 to me in her care sometime towards the end of this academic year. Will you please inquire for me whether this has been done?

With best thanks, and with Helen's and my very best greetings to you and Mrs. Morgenstern, as ever,

Sincerely yours,

Nelson.