

### Mel Scult on Kaplan

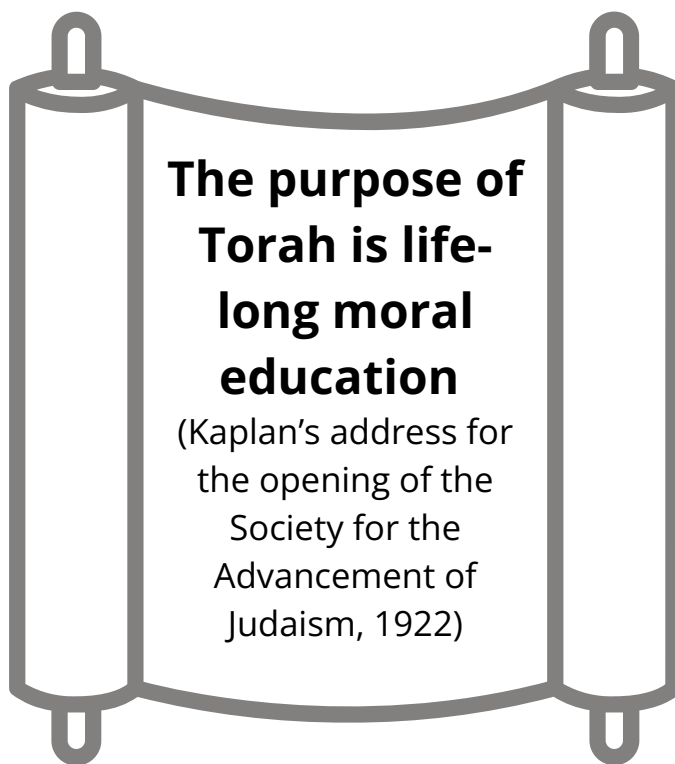
Perhaps the most important element in shlemut for Kaplan was integration. He pointed out that this exists on many levels. The first and perhaps the most basic level is the personal. The wholeness, the perfectibility, the integration of the self. For Kaplan, as for Emerson, the self was a process or a series of processes, not an entity. He has the wonderful word to "thingify." We make processes into things. He pointed out our tendency to thingification in connection with Torah and with God and with Israel.

### The Sabbath

In pursuit of other aims we frequently become so absorbed in the means as to lose sight of the goal... Here the Sabbath comes to our aid. An artist cannot be continually wielding his brush. He must stop at times in his painting to freshen his vision of the object, the meaning of which he wishes to express on his canvas.

"Living is also an art. We dare not become absorbed in its technical processes and lose our

consciousness of its general plan... The Sabbath represents those moments when we pause in our brushwork to renew our vision of the object. Having done so we take ourselves to our painting with clarified vision and renewed energy." (Mordecai Kaplan, *The Meaning of God in Modern Jewish Religion*, page 59)



### Future of the American Jew

But to qualify for participation in this struggle, Jewry must set its own house in order. The Jewish community is not free from the evils that beset society in general and must accept full responsibility for carrying on the fight against them on its own sector of humanity's front. (Mordecai Kaplan, *Future of the American Jew*, 1948; page 54)

### Questions

1. These are argumentative, exhausting times. In and of itself, does this demand more "recovery sabbaticals"?
2. How do we pursue all these different goals in ways that are holistic and healthy?
3. Which of these selections would you make the Mishnah (anchoring) piece of your own Talmud page?
4. What might be the defining feature of a successful "sabbatical" from tikkun olam/moral education?